

ONWARD



TO STRENGTHENING THE REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHIST MOVEMENT

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SUMMER 2000



\$1

First Issue!

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And More!

Philadelphia, L.A. Prepare for Massive Demonstrations Against Party System

By Direct Action Network

Join thousands of concerned people in Philadelphia and Los Angeles to let both the Republican and Democratic Parties know that business cannot continue as usual. We will come from every corner of the world united in our demand for a total change of priorities from the production of things to the caring for people and the environment. Join us in a series of marches, nonviolent direct actions and events leading up to and during the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia, July 31- August 3 and the Democratic National Convention in LA, August 14-17.

We will celebrate and renew our resistance to: corporate globalization, militarism, poverty, starvation, campaign finance corruption, sexism, racism, homo/trans-phobia, criminalization of youth, environmental destruction, prison industrial complex, genocide, undermining of organizing labor, ageism, welfare reform, persecution and deportation of immigrants, lack of decent and affordable healthcare, undermining of small family farms, disintegration of public education, law enforcement corruption, brutality and state sanctioned murder, corporate controlled media, exploitation of the disabled and all forms of oppression that divide people throughout the world. **Human Need Not Corporate Greed!**

The gap between the rich and the poor widens daily. Fewer and fewer corporations and the ruling elite are controlling more and more of the wealth, the media and the political process. Both the Democrats and the Republicans, controlled by corporate dollars, make the way for global exploitation by the multinationals. Both parties are more interested in serving special interests than in addressing the needs and wants of the people they are supposed to represent.

For the rest of us, the dollar buys less than it did twenty years ago, we have less time with our loved ones, and the social safety net has been pulled out from under millions of us. Our health, healthcare, and education are in shambles and teachers, caregivers and service workers are underpaid. Insurance companies make billions out of people's misery and corporations are starting to control our schools. Housing and transportation are not affordable or accessible and rarely meet the needs of those who need it most, particularly those who are disabled. Homelessness is a major and growing problem.

Everyday, our communities and youth are criminalized. Racial profiling is rampant. The US has the largest prison population in the

world where women of color, 80% of whom are mothers, are the fastest growing population. The Three Strikes laws in several states feeds the prison industry and the death penalty disproportionately kills Black and other men of color. Immigrant communities are under attack and amnesty and benefits are not available to most. While hate crimes are on the rise, police



New wave of political protest hits the streets

continue to harass communities of color and the gay community. Those who want or need treatment for substance abuse are criminalized.

Women lack equal pay and their unwaged work is undervalued. Finding quality childcare is a challenge and childcare workers receive insulting wages, or none at all. Mothers on welfare are being penalized and told that raising their own children is not work. Instead of prioritizing child care, the brutal demands of the global market have meant less time with them. Older people who could be enjoying a well-earned retirement, are forced to decide between medicines and food—most cannot afford prescriptions or alternative treatments. HIV positive people need full access to treatments and care of their choice. We need universal healthcare and not a healthcare and medical research industry whose commitment is to profits.

Technology has leapt ahead, leaving most of us behind and rather than reducing our burden of work, we are working harder. While the economy is supposedly booming, most of us are making less. Labor unions are under attack, jobs are being privatized, and workers who try to organize face ferocious opposition. Although the right to organize a union exists, harassment and intimidation is still rampant.

Mobilize For Global Justice

Indigenous peoples from Chiapas, Mexico, to the U'wa in Colombia, to the Diné people in Arizona, to Bolivia, villages and pueblos throughout the world are under attack. Africa,

Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and other countries of the Global South are suffocating under structural adjustment policies, third world debt and US intervention under the guise of the 'war on drugs.'

Women and children are carrying the greatest burden of the 'Third-World debt.' Reparations for slavery and theft of indigenous lands have never been paid. Through its politically motivated economic embargoes, the US has caused the hunger and suffering of millions. Military rape and mayhem have devastated entire countries, most recently in Eastern Europe.

Instead of sustainable farming, we face an onslaught of genetically modified foods and damage from pesticides as mega-corporations take over the international food supply. Instead of showing respect for our environment, those in power have brought us to the brink of an environmental disaster. We are all under threat, none are immune.

Instead of building positive international collaboration, governments bypass local communities and hire "professionals" to be used against the rest of us—imposing their corporate solutions. Worsening economic realities are matched by increased military spending, militarization and the pouring of billions into the coffers of the arms merchants. Escalating racial, ethnic, gender and religious hatreds are fanned by an economy that glorifies the global market.

US political leaders and their corporate sponsors control the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO and it is they who must be held accountable for this global suffering and environmental devastation. No More Business As Usual!

A Festival of Resistance

In Los Angeles, we are powerful in our diversity and united in our commitment. We celebrate our differences and are working to cross the divisions among us. We are building a broad progressive movement that makes a way for all who are suffering to take action on their own behalf. We will raise our concerns, speak with a unified voice and demand a total change. People must come before profit.

This is the beginning of the politics of the new millennium. Join us in our call to put an end to poverty, hunger militarism and the destruction of the environment. Join us in our call for economic, social, gender and racial justice. Join us in our call for peace and freedom. Join us as we march for our lives, our future and for the generations to come. Join us to make history in Philly and LA. (from www.d2kla.org) See page 15 for specifics on the conventions!

Sanctions on Iraq: Genocide of a Generation

By Michael Chameidis

Almost two million people have died due to the US-led UN sanctions on Iraq. And over 500,000 deaths are children under the age of five. While not officially at war, the US regularly bombs Iraq. Every other day, an Iraqi school, neighborhood, or factory—and the people inside—are destroyed.

While leaders in both the Republican and Democratic parties stand strong in their support of the war against Iraq, a worldwide movement is building to stop the war. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization, Pope John Paul II, the Red Cross, Dennis Halliday and Hons Von Sponek (the last two UN Humanitarian Coordinators in Iraq), Jutta Burghart - the former head of the UN World Food Program in Iraq, UNSCOM (UN weapons

inspections agency in Iraq) inspector Scott Ritter, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the UN Subcommittee of Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the Security Council's Humanitarian Panel, the governments of France, China, Russia, 70 US representatives, and millions of people have all condemned the sanctions on Iraq. Only the US and Britain are in favor of keeping the sanctions.

Sanctions Target the Vulnerable

The US government uses many excuses to justify the sanctions, but the fact is, sanctions are designed to kill and torture the civilian population. After Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the US pushed through a UN resolution calling for sanctions on Iraq. All Iraqi money in foreign banks was frozen and all foreign trade was cut off. This policy decision was to cause great suf-

fering to the people of Iraq. Imagine what would happen to the US if sanctions were imposed; within a day, the stock market would crash, foreign factories would be cut off, and our country would hit a depression worse than 1929.

But sanctions on Iraq are far more devastating. Iraq's economy is built on exporting oil and importing most everything else. Before the war, Iraq imported 70% of its food and 50% of its pharmaceuticals. It doesn't take an expert to figure out what happens when you cut off half a country's food supply. Sanctions are a clear plan for destruction.

The poorest, most vulnerable elements of society are the ones most effected by sanctions. Rich people can move, travel, and afford to buy things on the underground market.

According to UNICEF, 1.9 million people
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WELCOME TO ONWARD:

ONWARD is a quarterly Anarchist Newspaper produced by the Onward Collective. Our intent is to facilitate both a report of Anarchist actions throughout the world, as well as foster analysis of current events from an Anarchist perspective, all in the process of building an intelligent, well informed and powerful revolutionary movement. Our goal is to show the relation of the different liberation struggles (animal, earth and human) and the unification of often separated movements. As far as we're concerned, different Anarchist viewpoints (Syndicalist, Feminist, Green etc.) are not mutually exclusive, but rather all fit together in the larger revolutionary framework. The short-term goal is unification which will result in the long-term goal and action of social revolution.

SUBMISSIONS:

ONWARD depends very much upon submissions from people throughout the world. Submissions can be on a wide variety of topics: from struggles in your community to analysis of current events. In an effort to further the struggle, please include information on how to get involved in the issue you're reporting on, but please do not exceed 3,000 words in length. Pictures and other graphics are always welcome and needed, and should be sent via land mail to the collective's PO Box. Though we prefer articles be sent on email, they can also be sent on IBM format disks, or send hard copies typed or even crayon-written to the PO Box. The collective reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity, but please include a name, address (land and email) and phone number in the case of large editions. Please send a self addressed stamped envelope if you would like your picture(s) or article(s) back.

ADVERTISEMENTS:

While our desire to keep this paper as politically packed as possible means we limit the amount of advertisements we accept, we still encourage interested advertisers to get in contact. Our rates are as follows:

1/8 page (4.75"x4"): \$10
1/5 page (3.25"x7.75" or 10"x2.5"): \$16
1/4 page (4.75"x7.75" or 10"x4"): \$25
1/2 page (10"x7.75"): \$50

DISTRIBUTION:

We need your involvement to distribute ONWARD as widely as possible! 10 copies: \$7; 20 copies: \$13; 30 copies: \$20; 40 copies: \$25; 50 copies: \$30. Don't rip people off! We suggest selling the paper for \$1 per copy.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

ONWARD depends on subscriptions and donations in order to sustain itself, so please subscribe! Subscriptions for one year are \$7-10 national and \$12-15 international (including Canada). As always, subscriptions are free to prisoners. Single issues are \$2 postage paid. Send cash, checks or money orders made out to ONWARD to our PO Box.

DISCLAIMER:

The views expressed in ONWARD are those of the author, they do not necessarily represent the ideas of the Onward Collective. Articles appear in the paper because we find them relevant, not because they mirror our own beliefs. Also, no article in the publication is intended to encourage or promote illegal activity; the content is solely for educational purposes.

Intentional revised spellings are expressions of individual contributor's political beliefs (i.e. 'kop' instead of 'cop').

DEADLINES: ISSUE 2

- Ads: September 15, 2000.
- Submissions (articles, graphics): September 20, 2000.

The earlier things get in, the more likely they will get printed (hint hint). Issue 2 will be out in mid-October.

THE ONWARD COLLECTIVE IS:

Rob Augman, Neil Batelli, Dan Berger, Lauren Buie, Ynes DeLoach, Jeff Frank, Tom Thomson, Justin Tichy

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WELCOME TO ONWARD!

During the N30 protests late last year in Seattle against the WTO, the Independent Media Center (IMC) was set up. It was/is a space organized by the grassroots movement to break past the corporate media block that was determined to skew if not flat out ignore the massive protests and the messages of the protesters. I was in Ohio at the time and for 4 straight days (November 30th- Dec 3rd) I watched half-hour news segments of the protests fed by satellite and broadcast on the campus of Bowling Green University, thousands of miles away from Seattle. The Independent Media Center functioned as a constantly humming news office that produced segments that were broadcasted the very next day to keep people, like myself, that were interested in the events, updated and informed to the actions thousands of miles away. It was calculated that the IMC's website received more hits than any of the for-profit's websites. The for-profits were buying video footage from the IMC as well as posting a link to the IMC webpage from their own. It was not just the magnitude of mass protest in Seattle but also the mass media of the independent type that was incredible. The for-profits were left with no choice but to tell the truth or at least investigate the real happenings of the protests. Although they tried to lie about the protests they were only made fools because of the amount of independent media.

During the A16 protests in Washington, DC last April, the IMC popped up and told the truth about the protests. Like in Seattle, video segments were produced. In true Anarchist spirit, we are writing our own history! But there was a definite lack of Anarchist print media on the streets. This weakness allows our struggle to be identified by the for-profit media. It allows our struggle to be identified for us. There's a "say what you're for before someone does it for you" that is unavoidable when it comes to protest, especially if you're an Anarchist. That lesson was learned and the IMC and many other media activists around the world have risen to the call.

The long term goal of the IMC, ONWARD, and other independent media outlets must be the absolute replacement of the for-profit media. The first step is to create a powerful alternative like was done most successfully during the N30 protests. Networks between the different independent medias must be made. And like the temporary squats, street medics, free food services, and educational workshops on everything from learning your legal rights to learning how to make puppets, we must grow to the size of uncompromising replacement of the for-profit structure presently in power. Like in Howard Ehrlich's article, (pg. 13), we must create a world of counter-institutions. We must aim to

replace the current structure in every aspect, from transportation to food distribution, with free associations and workers' self-management. As Howard mentions in his article, we will face repression. This can be seen already. Media activists attempting to print *Blindspot*, a small daily newsletter printed by the IMC during N30 and A16, were forced to leave *Kinko's* copy shop because their presence put the shop in heat with the police and other government agencies bent on shutting down the shop as they had already done to others, for allowing activists to print pro-demonstration or anti-World Bank/ IMF flyers.

The necessity for another Anarchist newspaper should be obvious, especially to Anarchists. As long as popular opinion continues to not just have a skewed perception of what Anarchy is, but an absolutely opposite idea of what Anarchists define it as, the necessity for more and more avenues of theory, discussion, opinion, and news from, by, and about anarchists (as *A-Infos* internet news source, www.ainfos.tao.ca, states) must grow. Our news outlets must grow as well as our support for those already in place. Anarchist media must grow like all our other counter-institutions (ie: free food, clothing, housing, and healthcare). These must become: first, sustaining projects, second, strong alternatives to the present institutions, and third, completely replace those institutions. There are plenty of movements who wish to take the first step only. Even many want to take the second step as well. But as Anarchists, we mean to complete this process and take all three steps. If we don't have our own media sources our work will continue to be seen as reformist. We must say loudly, not only what we're against, but just as importantly, what we are for. And there is no media outlet but our own that is going to allow us to say that.

★★★

In this issue you will find the call-to-actions against the party system happening this summer. Not only will you find information about the upcoming protests but also news reports from Ecuador, Bolivia, Iraq, Puerto Rico and Ireland where the past and present imperialism (most specifically American imperialism) has hijacked the self-determination of regions of people who aim to create different political and cultural structures than our own. These people are fighting back, like they have been for hundreds of years, and their struggles must be acknowledged and supported as part of our own. As political prisoner Jalil Muntajim writes (pg. 6), imperialism

also affects us at home, here in the US, where over 2 million people are imprisoned. Most of these people are, disproportionately, people of color. But, as prisoner Ali Khalid Abdullah points out on page 10, the present Anarchist movement has had tremendous difficulty in involving people of color in the Anarchist movement. And why is the Anarchist movement, built on a theory of non-hierarchical equality, so male-centered? And what can we do to change that? Anarchist Black Cross activist Angela Beallor answers those questions (pg. 13). For Anarchism to be seen as a viable alternative to the present system, and for the Anarchist movement to be successful, we must break out of the white male shell that we often find ourselves in. Capitalism is by no means the only form of oppression that must be smashed.

★★★

As ONWARD presents news stories, essentially writing the present history, it is important that we recognize and learn from the radicals that came before us, and the movement that they were a part of. In this issue, we highlight Louise Michel, Anarchist who played a role in the Paris Commune, and the Black Liberation Army, an underground group in the US that grew out of the Black Panther Party. Both are important people/struggles very much influential - yet widely unknown - to today's movements. Many of these freedom fighters are imprisoned today and deserve our support. As BLA prisoner of war Ojore N. Lutalo writes, "Any movement that does not support its political internees is a sham movement!" Please see the Anarchist Black Cross Federation page (pg. 14) and the political prisoners address list (pg. 16) and get involved!

We, the Onward Collective, aim to highlight the necessity of political struggle while actively taking part in it. Every article in ONWARD will have contact information for the author or on how to get involved in that particular struggle. Please do so, for, while one goal of media is to inform, the other and often overlooked goal is to inspire and motivate into action.

In Solidarity,
Rob Augman, The Onward Collective

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The Execution of Shaka Sankofa

WHO WAS HE & WHY DID THE STATE KILL HIM?

By Shane Gil

from www.saveshaka.0-dec.com

"Don't tell me about a criminal justice system, 'cause there ain't no justice in it - its just a criminal system." -Mumia Abu Jamal.

On June 22, at 8:49pm the Texas state government in coordination with federal officials, carried out another infamous "Texacution." Gary Graham who changed his name to Shaka Sankofa (after the African leader Shaka Zulu), was the 135 person to be executed under presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush Jr. Shaka was handcuffed to a gurney and forced to an execution he resisted on the grounds of innocence. Shaka's story is too common and the growing norm for youth within the US urban center. Born poor, he grew up with a mother suffering from mental illness and a debilitated alcoholic father. Without proper direction, he dropped out of school illiterate, and turned to crime to support himself. He was a petty thief, at times violent as petty thieves often need to be to remain alive. In 1981, Shaka was charged with the murder of Bobby Lambert, a known drug runner and a snitch aiding an investigation into other drug runners in the Texas area. Bobby Lambert was murdered outside a supermarket with a number of witnesses and \$6,000 on his person.

Shaka had been arrested for a crime spree of robberies and alleged rape (the rape has never been proven). While in jail, he was arraigned for the murder of Bobby Lambert and identified by one eye witness; there were 6 other eye witnesses that claimed Shaka was not the gunman and described a man physically different than Shaka, and 4 people passed polygraph tests claiming Shaka was with them at the time of the murder. The one eye witness that claims to have seen Shaka kill Bobby Lambert was in a car at night as much as 40 feet away. This lone woman's testimony is the only evidence the state had to convict Shaka. While on trial, the illiterate 17-year-old left the trial to his lawyer, who incompetently handled his case, never interviewing the 6 eyewitnesses that testified on police reports "Shaka was not the man." As a result,

Shaka, 17, was sentenced to death amidst serious doubt that he murdered Bobby Lambert and with the proof of a Salem witch trial. It is a violation of International Law to execute someone for a crime they did as a

minor...but International Law never stopped America before! So as a young man, Shaka was put on Death Row, a horrible place wrought with physical and mental abuse by prison officials. He earned his GED, a high school equivalency test and learned to read from the texts of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr. and Huey P. Newton. He later became a political leader and spokesman fighting for prison reform while seeking his own freedom. The justice/criminal corrections system, or as I'd put it, the Unjust, Criminal System fought to speed up his execution and wouldn't review the new found evidence proving his innocence. Every time he went before a court, the door was slammed in Shaka's face on technicalities. As his fight for freedom gained attention, Bush endorsed a misinformation campaign claiming he was a rapist/murderer who had his case reviewed some 30 odd times. THESE ARE LIES! If 30 courts found him guilty without proof then those 30 judges should be brought to trial!

Bush is known for killing more people through state sanctioned death than any other governor in history. His running for president, has brought his human rights abuse to light on the death penalty issue. On June 22, a parole board made up of Bush supporters and campaign contributors communicating via email and fax, said the execution will happen as planned. There was a last minute plea to the Supreme Court who refused to listen to the case and at 8:49pm central time, Shaka Sankofa was murdered.

Shaka declared his innocence from age 17 until death. Throughout the years, he admitted about his robberies and wrote letters as a man to the victims of his robberies apologizing for the actions of a boy. When an execution date is set, the damned person on Death Row is moved

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You can kill a revolutionary, but you cannot stop the revolution.

-Shaka Sankofa

HIS FINAL WORDS

I would like to say that I did not kill Bobby Lambert. That I'm an innocent black man that is being murdered. This is a lynching that is happening in America tonight.

There's overwhelming and compelling evidence of my defense that has never been heard in any court of America. What is happening here is an outrage for any civilized country to anybody anywhere to look at what's happening here is wrong.

I thank all of the people that have rallied to my cause. They've been standing in support of me. Who have finished with me.

I say to Mr. Lambert's family, I did not kill Bobby Lambert. You are pursuing the execution of an innocent man.

I want to express my sincere thanks to all of y'all. We must continue to move forward and do everything we can to outlaw legal lynching in America.

We must continue to stay strong all around the world, and people must come together to stop the systematic killing of poor and innocent black people. We must continue to stand together in unity and to demand a moratorium on all executions. We must not let this murder/lynching be forgotten tonight, my brothers. We must take it to the nation. We must keep our faith. We must go forward. We recognize that many leaders have died. Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and others who stood up for what was right. They stood up for what was just. We must, you must, brothers; that's why I have called you today. You must carry on that condition.

What is here is just a lynching that is taking place. But they're going to keep on lynching us for the next 100 years, if you do not carry on

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RESISTING HIS EXECUTION

By Feral

I am an Anarchist who was arrested in Huntsville, Texas Thursday night, June 22nd, in the attempt to stop the state from murdering Shaka Sankofa (also known as Gray Graham.) This is a firsthand account of the day. Our cases are still pending, so I won't use any names.

I first arrived with Houston Food Not Bombs (FNB) outside the Walls Unit of the Huntsville State Penitentiary around 10:00am. The police had cordoned off the area with a checkpoint at the top of the hill about 100 yards away from the protest. The security was very restrictive, with no backpacks or coolers allowed and lots of pat-downs and searches. FNB set up at the bottom of the hill with crates of sandwiches and water. Because we couldn't get our cooler in, we spent a lot of time going up and down the hill refilling clear plastic jugs.

The police presence was very heavy, both around the prison and throughout town, and was bolstered by gray-shirted prison guards. The crowd was at least 400 strong, and the energy early on was intense. At one point the rally took to the streets of Huntsville, blocking traffic and making our voices heard. Chants included "The whole world is watching, stop the legal lynching" and "No justice, no peace, till Shaka's released." The march went into the low-income area of Huntsville for a while and got some locals to join the struggle with us back at the prison unit. As the day wore on, FNB continued working hard distributing water, which was badly needed in the 100 degrees heat.

As the 6pm execution time drew near, the crowd got louder and marched around the perimeter of the cordoned-off protest zone. At five minutes to six, a group of protesters tore down one of the orange road barricades. Several people rushed over the barricade and charged towards the execution house where Shaka was being held. The police and guards seemed very surprised and off-guard, but through sheer numbers managed to stop us. I lost track of the others when I was tackled from behind and found myself face down on the ground with at least three officers holding me down and cuffing me tightly. I was led/carried/forced to a van across the street, where they loaded all eight of us. Two of us had cuts and abrasions on our faces from being thrown onto the pavement (one of whom had a mask that was pulled down around his neck and used to choke him), one had her head knocked on the van's doorjamb, and we all had cuff-marks for awhile.

The eight of us were taken to Walker County Jail. One of us was released because she is a minor, and the rest were charged with Disorderly Conduct. Later the charges were upped to Criminal Trespass, a class B misdemeanor carrying possible jail time. Later another woman was arrested after throwing an empty plastic bottle that hit a police officer on the arm. She was given the ridiculous charge of felony assault, and we are concentrating most of our defense efforts on her case.

The inmates in jail were very friendly and supportive when they found out who we were, especially in the women's cell where they had a TV and watched the news. We were constantly harassed by the guards, waking us up constantly, calling us smart-asses when we asked to see our lawyer, moving us from holding cell to holding cell, etc. but nothing major.

We were kept in jail overnight and I hear that two busloads of Houston protesters parked on the freeway and refused to leave until a lawyer could come in and see that we were okay. Some of our friends and supporters stayed in Huntsville that night to form an impromptu legal team and got us out on bond the next morning.

Unfortunately all of our actions were not enough, and the state was still able to murder Shaka Sankofa around 9:00pm. I stand by what we did and am glad they didn't get away with putting Shaka to death without at least having to arrest someone. This also put more pressure on the bastards and raised the whole level of resistance there.

What remains left is for us to make sure Shaka's final words ring true: "You can kill the revolutionary, but you can't kill the revolution." END STATE MURDER BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY!

Indigenous Revolt in Ecuador and US Attempts to Crush it

By Scott Campbell

ECUADOR— The indigenous people of Ecuador — at least 4 million of a population of 12 million and supported by students, unions, and parts of the army — revolted against the government on January 15. Leading the revolt was the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) together with the Patriotic Front (FP), combining unions, student associations, campesino organizations, leftist parties, and other social and grassroots sectors.

By January 17, thousands of people went to the capital, Quito, and others were erecting highway blockades all over the country in an effort to bring its functioning to a standstill.

Twenty-five thousand indigenous protesters were in Quito by January 19. Transportation and oil workers, street vendors and others went on strike to show their support of the efforts. The army called for the resignation of the president and on January 21, armed soldiers stepped aside as over 500 protesters took over the Congress and Supreme Court buildings in Quito. CONAIE announced a junta comprised of former Justice Carlos Solorzano, Colonel Lucio Guitierrez Borbua, and CONAIE president Antonio Vargas. At about 11:30 p.m., the head of the armed forces, General Carlos Mednoza, replaced Col. Borbua. It was declared the "Junta of National Salvation."

However, at 2 a.m. on January 22, Gen. Mednoza announced his withdrawal from the junta, and it collapsed. Vice President of Ecuador, Gustavo Noboa, claimed power and signed a resolution removing President Jamil Mahuad from the presidency. Mahuad then went on television and endorsed Noboa. CONAIE announced that it would never support the Noboa presidency, but the revolt had failed.

The Revolt and Why it Failed

Ecuador's economy has been plagued with recession. After 17 months in office, all of Mahuad's attempts to better the situation had failed. In the past few months, Ecuador's economy had shrunk by 7% while inflation had risen by 40.7%. Army support stemmed from officers' discontent with Mahuad's choice to slash the military budget.

Preceding the revolt, Mahuad introduced his plan to "dollarize" the economy by making the dollar the official currency, which would make the savings of Ecuadorians worthless, and hurt the country's more than 7 million poor people.

After the revolt we learned that Gen. Mednoza only joined the junta in an effort "to prevent bloodshed," and had no intention of creating a lasting alliance. After things calmed down, he withdrew his support.

The United States helped to squash the revolt. Labeling the coup as "undemocratic," the US "threatened to cut foreign aid and discourage foreign investment in Ecuador if power was not restored to the elected government." "Peter Romero, US Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, had warned leaders of the uprising that they faced 'political and economic isolation, carrying with them even worse misery for the Ecuadorian people.'"

Also, the United Nations and the Organization of American States denounced the coup, as did the South American Mercosur trade bloc.

What is most interesting about the situation is that while the US and others were busy condemning the revolt as undemocratic, they failed to notice that 71% of the population of Ecuador supported the uprising and the "democratic" regime that the US wanted Ecuador to revert to was only supported by 7% of the population.

All that the US and others were really concerned about was keeping in place a system friendly to foreign investment. An indigenous-led government representative of the people would not be so keen on continuing a US

friendly economic plan that has kept the majority of Ecuador in poverty for years.

More recently there have been new strikes against the dollarization plans of now-president Gustavo Noboa. The strikes on June 15 and 16 were called by the FP to protest the neo-liberal economic policies of the World Bank and IMF. "The strike demands included: no dollarization; a price freeze and the elimination of all structural adjustments; no payment of the external debt; and an end to plans for privatization of state-owned companies in strategic sectors." Unions and students again gathered in Quito, and highways were again blocked throughout the country. But this time, CONAIE did not back the strike. They supported the demands, but left it up to the communities to decide whether or not to join the strike.

FP president Luis Villacis at a June 17 press conference announced "that the June 15-16 actions had been 'very important' but not a 'success.' He told the Spanish wire service EFE that the FP was 'preparing a general uprising' for June 21. 'On the 21 there will be a great taking of Quito,' he said, 'No less than 20,000 teachers, parents, indigenous people and campesinos will participate.'"

On the 21st, 5,000 striking teachers marched on Quito and were countered by tear gas from the police, but the 'general uprising' touted by Villacis seems to not have occurred.

Like in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Chad, and many other countries all over the world, the US has managed to keep in power government that they prefer, over the desires of the country's own inhabitants; showing yet again that imperialism is not dead, it's just taken another form.

(Most of the info for this article was taken from the Nicaragua Solidarity Network's *Weekly News Update on the Americas*, #521 and 542, and the Washington Post article "Civilian Rule is Restored in Ecuador." 1/23/00, Page A1.)

Vieques, The Navy's Playground - Paradise Lost

By Daniel A. Vázquez

PUERTO RICO-- Vieques is an island a few miles from the northeast coast of Puerto Rico. It has a population of around 9,500 civilians. For fifty years, the island and its surrounding waters have been used as training grounds for the US, its allies and other countries that rent it. The Navy uses the eastern side of the island for its live fire exercises, while the western side serves for weapons storage.

Since 1941 Viequeses have been restricted to live in the middle of land used in military exercises for most of the year. Their days are filled with incredibly loud explosions, some of which can even be heard as far away as the island of Saint Thomas.

In the first half of the 20th century, Vieques depended mostly on sugar cane cultivation. When the Navy took away the productive agricultural lands the biggest source of income became fishing. However, fishermen have ever since been restricted access to the best fisheries, since the Navy considers them very good bombing sites. There are no major employers in the island; the occupation of the best lands and beaches together with the noise and danger posed by the explosions has impeded tourist development. The Navy only employs a few security guards and janitors, it provides no well paying jobs and no significant contributions to the economy. This combined with the difficulties in getting to the island - which are farther complicated by the fact that the Navy doesn't permit ferry boats to transit through its waters - make economic development impossible.

Obsolete Training

Proponents of the continued use of the island cite US national security needs. However even by their own standards, those claims are flawed. One of the most important capabilities offered to the Navy by the island of Vieques are amphibious landings, these landings, (like in the Hollywood movie "Saving Private Ryan") have not been used in half a century, since the Korean war. They are too dangerous and deadly, and modern armies have far more accurate and effective methods of warfare. Even so, the Navy

says that it needs the island, because, "one day, we might need them."

The Navy also cites the perfect location of the island. It is close to the main facilities of the Roosevelt Roads base, and not far from the city of San Juan. At the same time it is "far away from civilian populations" (apparently the island's population does not count) and outside of any big shipping routes. Its waters are deep and permit the use of aircraft carriers and other ships.

Yet, in reality, the range is extremely close to civilians and in the past, stray bullets have hit the civilian sector of the island. In addition, the noise caused by the bombings is heard miles away, even in the Mainland town of Fajardo. Moreover, the use of depleted uranium - which the Navy has admitted to using - produces dust that is dispersed by the strong winds. Winds that can easily reach populations not only in Vieques

do it for free.

Eyes are opened

Until not very long ago, very few people anywhere, including Puerto Rico, knew about the full extent of the situation in Vieques. For half a century, those in power considered it a cause only espoused by radical leftists and by independence supporters. A cause only supported by "Freaks." However, this all changed ten months ago on April 19 of last year when bombs hit a Navy observation post and David Sanes, a civilian security guard for the Navy, died.

This is not the first time this has happened. Others have been killed, injured and maimed before. Yet this time everyone in Puerto Rico became interested in the topic. Rapidly, people started to realize what was happening. In the next few months, for the first time in modern history, the majority of Puerto Ricans from all ideologies united in one cause. This was summarized by a report of government commission on Vieques that stated that the bombings should stop and the Navy should leave immediately.

Just a few days after the death of David Sanes, protesters started defying federal laws and entering their lands to establish civil disobedience camps. Many Viequeses, were amazed when they discovered the beautiful white sand beaches that the Navy used for its amphibious operations, lands that used to belong to their families.

The struggle continues today. In these months, many things about US Navy negligence and abuses have come out of the dark: We have discovered that the high cancer rate in Vieques - 27% higher than in the rest on Puerto Rico - might be related to the use of radioactive depleted uranium bullets and other contaminants. We have seen all the beautiful coral reefs destroyed by bombs. We have seen endangered turtles nest in beaches, right next to unexploded ammunition. We have seen the return of vegetation and beauty to an area that was totally barren just after the bombings, and we have achieved the impossible: we have made the most powerful organization in the World, the US military, stop its bombings.

Unfortunately, on January 31, the governor of Puerto Rico, Pedro Rosselló, broke the consensus and agreed to permit the resumption of the bombing in Vieques for at least three more years. This so-called "agreement" is really a unilateral imposition on the democratic will of the people of Puerto Rico. It is not binding and the Federal Government has given many hints that it does not intend to obey it. The document is not even an executive order: it is a memo, a memo that can be changed by any president and that depends on Congress for its final implementation.

The President has repeatedly denied a delegation of civilians from Vieques the opportunity of talking to him. Presently, there is a water-only fast in front of the White House by Dartmouth doctoral student Héctor Rosario, who is demanding that Clinton talks to Viequeses. Clinton's document will give less money to Viequeses, regardless of the referendum's result, than what is spent on common US Army bombers: forty or fifty million dollars depending on the referendum's outcome.

The people of Vieques and the majority of the Puerto Rican people, including people from Rosselló's own statehood party want the Navy out. We do not trust them. In 1983, they signed an agreement practically identical to the present one, and just weeks later, they broke it and increased even more bombings.

More than a year after the death of David Sanes, hundreds of people are still camped in civil disobedience camps inside the most littered parts of the range. These people, from all walks of life - from the catholic church to teacher organizations - were able to stop the bombings and make the mighty US Navy conduct its practices somewhere else.

Unfortunately, on May 4th, US Marshalls and the FBI removed the protesters. There was no violence whatsoever and all the protesters behaved like heroes and defenders of peace. In front of the TV cameras, the authorities behaved with incredible politeness. Yet, unfortunately, there were widespread reports of abuses as soon as the prisoners were taken to Roosevelt Roads, when TV cameras were not present. People were denied water, old women were stripped naked in front of their religious congregations, and left in the sun for hours at a time. The Navy also denied many of them legal representation.

Since the arrests, groups of people have regularly been entering the Navy's training grounds. The most prominent of them is PR Independence party President Rubén Berrios Martínez, who spent one whole year inside the bombing range and who reentered the bombing area, a few days after being arrested in the May sweep.

Mr. Berrios was taken to trial by the federal authorities, in the same courtroom where he stood trial for the same accusations thirty years ago, a "crime" that cost him about a year in jail.

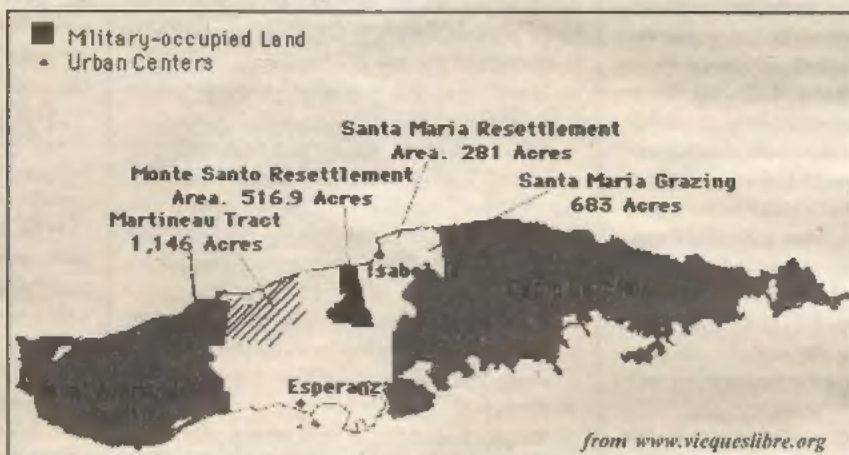
As Mr. Berrios said, this time the people favor him. To avoid creating a martyr, the federal judge did not give him a big sentence, but because of pressures from the US government, he felt he had to do something. So, the judge gave Mr. Berrios and Mr. José Fernández Porto, his environmental advisor, the ridiculous sentence of six and four hours in jail, respectively. The detainees jokingly described the sentence as one they served in the same clothes in which they stood trial while eating sandwiches and chatting between themselves.

Future Strategy

We are fighting a formidable adversary. Yet getting the Navy out of Vieques is not impossible, but rather inevitable. Civil disobedience is still probably the biggest "weapon" we have against the Navy's might. The Navy has not still resumed their full bombing of Vieques. They have done some small-scale exercises. Yet massive acts of civil disobedience are still not underway. Organizers are waiting for the Navy to start their full-scale bombings with tanks, amphibious vehicles, airplanes, destroyers, aircraft carriers and other countries Navy's (Vieques is regularly rented to other nations. The island is advertised as being perfect for the "testing of conventional and unconventional weapons.") Then we will all start entering our lands again and fighting Goliath. We will eventually win, we might not have so much money or clout, but justice is on our side.

★For more information: University of Florida Student Peace Action Vieques focus group: <http://grove.ufl.edu/~ufspa/vieques.htm>
★For the most up to date information and how to help: <http://www.viequeslibre.org>

Daniel A. Vázquez was born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico where he intends to return to live after college. He is currently a junior at the University of Florida. He visited the civil disobedience camps in December 1999. (since this article was written, the Navy has resumed bombings but the protests continue.)



Map of Vieques showing military occupied land compared to where people on the island live

but in the Puerto Rican mainland too.

If the Navy really needs to train, they can certainly do it somewhere else, inside the US, where the effects are born by people who actually are part of a state in the union. Puerto Rico has neither the advantages (nor disadvantages) of being a state, or an independent nation. Culturally a Spanish-speaking Caribbean nation, Puerto Rico has been a colony of the United States since 1898. The Navy wants to keep Vieques because they can do everything there they are not allowed to do elsewhere. And they

Bolivian City Hall Burns in Uprising

By Robby Barnes

BOLIVIA-- On May 29, 2000, at 7 a.m., in the city of Alto, thousands of demonstrators blocked the country's most important highway. The three main groups of people who participated in this demonstration were young people and their families who were demanding the creation of an autonomous university for this city of one million, unionists who were challenging the draconian tax reforms, and local residents challenging the increases in charges for electricity, sewage and fuel. There were also unionists protesting the fascist policies of the genocidal former dictator and now President, Hugo Banzer.

The three main groups began marching from separate points and converged at the city hall at about 11 a.m. The police guarding the building sprayed the demonstrators with tear gas. The demonstrators reacted by throwing rocks and large firecrackers. After a while, they entered the building and smashed computers, furniture, and windows, and set fire to parts of a reactionary display of the Virgin Mary that the mayor had in an office. Finally, they set parts of the building itself on fire.

About 20,000 people participated in the protest, chanting denunciations of the demagogic mayor and the President, the murderer, General Hugo Banzer. The police pulled back in fear of the popular fury but returned at 1 p.m. to attack the protesters. Several people were injured, and six people were arrested and charged with damaging public property.

The following day, the government accused anarchists of instigating the rebellion.

The people who participated in these events are residents of the poorest city in Bolivia. And Bolivia was classified by the UN at the end of March as having the second poorest economy in the world; only the economy of Bangladesh is poorer. Bolivia is a country which is currently

governed by a murderer, who, in the 1970s headed a brutal military dictatorship which perpetrated numerous disappearances, hundreds of murders, tortured thousands and sent thousands into exile. It incarcerated thousands in concentration camps.

During February and April of this year, the people of Cochabamba took direct action and created an openly pre-insurrectionary situation to expel the multinationals International Water and Abengoa, which had raised the water rates by three-hundred percent.

Also this year, university students in the cities of Potosí, Sucre, Santa Cruz and La Paz fought the repressive forces with dynamite. In some cases, they were able to stop the plans for the privatization of education.

During the 1940s, popular demonstrations culminated when a huge crowd overwhelmed the army and the police, entered the government palace and proceeded to hang then President Villarroel from a lamppost.

During the 1950s, militias of urban and rural workers defeated the army, even though later sections of the rising bourgeoisie stole the social revolution.

The Bolivian state has been weakened by a nonhierarchical movement from below. On several occasions this movement has gone beyond the tutelage of the union and Leninist party bureaucracies. Mass spontaneity and popular initiative have been of great importance in the movement, even though there have been very few local anarchists involved. The basic weakness of anarchist organizations has made it difficult for them to be involved as much as they should.

Still, there are many reasons for hope in this so-called forgotten corner of the world.

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March against US imperialism in Vieques



John Brown 2000



CONFERENCE REPORT

By Meg Starr and Matt Meyer

The John Brown 2000 national conference, which took place May 12-14, 2000 at New York's Hunter College, brought together an unprecedented number of liberation movement leaders from the Black/New Afrikan, Puerto Rican and Native American Movements, along with anti-racist white activists. We came together to reflect upon the state of our progressive campaigns, to network, and to strategize for the future. Over two-hundred and fifty people attended the opening "Celebration of Resistance" on Friday evening, approximately 175 folks from throughout the U.S. and Canada participated in the conference, and our ongoing web-site [www.johnbrown2000.org] seeks to keep hundreds of others in touch.

To give a quick birds-eye view of the weekend, let us first say that most of us were in tears of joy and solidarity when Alicia Rodriguez recently released Puerto Rican prisoner of war took the stage at the Celebration, marking the historic first time any of the Puerto Rican prisoners have addressed a New York audience. As she embraced Laura Whitehorn, whom she has not seen since the two of them were serving time at Dublin California's Federal Correctional Institution, the gathering erupted in shouts and applause! Alicia has been particularly active in work against continued U.S. military involvement in Vieques, and she brought us up-to-the-minute reports on that struggle, some of which got published in a full-page article in last Monday's El Diario. Another former political prisoner- South Africa's Dennis Brutus- flew in to New York following two weeks of intensive campaigning with South African Archbishop Ndungane on behalf of death row journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal. Brutus and Ndungane opened an international art show for Mumia on Robben Island, and helped introduce to the South African National Assembly a resolution calling for a new trial for Mumia.

In addition to the international links made at John Brown 2000, working sessions on the upcoming Republican Convention brought Mumia activists into the same room with folks from the anti-IMF Direct Action Network to plan a Republican Convention Mumia/anti-Criminal Injustice Action on August 1st (see www.brechtforum.org/mumiacd.shtml); a working group on the Prison Industrial Complex

helped concretize plans for a Critical Resistance East conference; and a workshop bringing together current organizers of the Anti-Racist Action network with founders of the old John Brown Anti-Klan committees helped bridge the generations and review lessons learned from past mistakes. Puerto Rico's Luis Nieves Falcon met up with former Black Panther Party spokesperson Dhoruba Bin Wahad for the first time in ten years-when together they organized the important Tribunal on Political Imprisonment in the US. Barbara Smith discussed Queer Liberation and Anti-Racism in the context of her work around the Diallo Trial. And at post-conference meetings, grassroots activists from a dozen cities discussed how we could better coordinate our efforts, while a grouping of lawyers and representatives-including Kathleen Cleaver and Geronimo Ji Jaga-strategized about moving forward a federal amnesty campaign for U.S. political prisoners.

One of our conference goals was to put our current work in an historical context. By celebrating John Brown, we wanted to honor those class and race traitors in our history who have seen anti-racism as fundamental to their own liberation and have understood that true anti-racism will only be achieved through radical, fundamental change. Another goal was to expose activists from different anti-racist, anti-imperialist movements to radicals of different generations, and to create dialogue. We also sought to contextualize the movements our political prisoners come from, and to discuss broadening the work for their defense. Finally, we hoped to strengthen our ties, and all of our anti-racist, radical work.

What follows is a keynote speech from the Saturday evening "State of the Movements" plenary. Dr. Luis Nieves Falcon, the strategist behind the movement to release the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners, head of the Puerto Rican Human Rights Campaign. The author of many books exposing Puerto Rican colonialism, he is a noted educator, sociologist and lawyer. First and foremost, however, he is a passionate and inspiring activist. Other speeches from the conference are available in tape format for radio shows, and may be transcribed by the fall. Keep in touch through our website, email Resistance in Brooklyn at (mmmsrnb@igc.org) and organize your own John Brown celebration next year!



John Brown

The Struggle To Be Human

By Luis Nieves Falcon

I come from the land of perennial destruction. Surface and underground contaminated waters. The continuous extinction of the radiant flora and its peculiar fauna. One where the colors of the flowers are less brilliant. The singing of the birds less common. The births of the native less frequent. The militarization of paradise absolute. Dissent forcibly squashed. Identification with the symbols of the dominate land forbidden. Repression and torture widespread. I come from the country where my Indian, African and Spanish peasant origins have been pillaged and massacred. I come from the country which boldly has refused to accept its official non-existence. I come from the country where its multicolored people, in struggling to remain themselves, have become symbols of resistance for survival. I come from Puerto Rico. The land of the landless and powerless. Here, I die and I'm born every day. In the process of dying and being born daily a vital strength nourishes us. It comes from the figures of the past and the present, the memories of the past, and the visions of the present. Vivid expressions of those who dared to challenge the capitalist imposition and its inherent elements of imperialism, colonialism, racism, sexism, homophobia and the degrading forces of physical and emotional oppression. Their words signal the way to the resistance for survival.

John Brown: "Slavery is the sum of all villainies."

Pedro Albizu Campos: "It is our duty to eliminate slavery wherever it surfaces both in the personal sphere as well as in the civic one. That duty is not achieved in a romantic way, since the survival of the human species is not possible without struggle."

Malcolm X: "Nobody can give you freedom. Nobody can give you equality or justice or anything. Freedom comes to us with power. Power in defense of freedom is greater than power on behalf of tyranny and oppression because power, real power, comes from conviction which produces action, uncompromising, action."

Ruben Berrios Martinez: "To refuse to obey the law of the imperialist oppressor is to fulfill the law of the land."

These words, which transcend the limitations of time and space, are an absolute condemnation of injustice. That kind of injustice which is fostered by an economic system which thrives on the exploitation of the human being by transforming the person into a disposable commodity completely deprived of its human essence. Those from whom humanity is stolen are the persons of color of the world: the Indigenous, Black, Asian and Latino peoples. They have been the objects of a rapacious capitalism, which breeds imperialism and colonialism, racism and sexism in a milieu of atrocity, and inhumanity aimed at suffocating the desire for freedom and assuring the continued persistence of the exploiters. These diverse faces of capitalism do not seem to diminish. On the contrary, its social impact continues increasing inequality: the death of the children of the Third World who die of hunger multiplies while the opulent capitalist countries throw away vital food needed to feed them; increasing external debt due mainly to military spending while the vast population lacks the minimal essentials to survive. Let us not fool ourselves. Capitalism is not decreasing, it is adopting new faces, new global strategies for continued domination through privatization, the International Monetary Fund and the transnational economic conglomerates. The disadvantaged of the world remain as disadvantaged as before. The dispossessed of the world remain as dispossessed as before. The voices of the past and the visions of the present spell out the path for recuperation: the only way to assure that justice will prevail over injustice, that liberty and freedom become available to the oppressed and dispossessed; a total commitment to the struggle for justice. In the case of Brown, Albizu Campos and Malcolm X, it meant a degree of valor and sacrifice not common in Capitalist societies, but common among the poor of the world. The price for defense of their principles was death. In the case of Berrios, it meant

the adherence to principles, which lead to incarceration, torture and ultimately death rather than compromise the collective dignity of the homeland. Commitment for them all meant to take sides. To take the side of the oppressed and dispossessed. In doing this it becomes clear "that nobody who's looking for a good image will ever be free," that "we are fighting for our recognition as human beings... for the right to live as free humans in this society." Total commitment means that the struggle for justice comes before any personal consideration. Additionally, personal commitment reveals itself in demonstrable actions on behalf of the consecution of justice; demonstrable actions full of valor and sacrifice.

In this sphere of total commitment, the pervasive effects of capitalism become clear to show that oppression, racism and sexism have become world-manifestations that bind us together. Because of this bonding, what happens today to a

Puerto Rican in Vieques happens to a Black person in Africa. What happens to a Black person in the United States happens to a Black person in Asia and Latin

America. What happens to an Indigenous person in Colombia happens to an Indigenous person in the United States. Thus, we have to realize that part of our oppression is part of the world oppression and part of our struggle is part of the world struggle. From this perspective, we cannot forget the voices of Vietnam, Cuba, Namibia and South Africa. Those were efforts to expand the margin of freedom of humanity and those struggles have become part of our own struggle. We must not forget the economic forces behind oppression because they show the similarity of the condition of domination wherever it is imposed; let's also not forget the relevance of subjective factors to the oppressive condition, and the realization that the greatest threat to the colonialist or imperialist is the union of the oppressed. In consequence, Indigenous, Black and Puerto Ricans evolve under the same oppressive condition and it is to the advantage of the racist domination structure to divide us and prevent a conjugation of efforts which will contribute to our own empowerment. Total commitment sensitizes all of us to realize that the bombardment of Vieques, the killings of peasant brothers and sisters in Mexico, the embargo imposed on Cuba and the incarceration of Mumia, Leonard, Oscar, Veranza and Susan and all those who oppose the colonial, imperialist, racist and sexist policies of this country, is our own bombardment, our own killing, our own incarceration. It is this realization and intimate sharing of the violence of oppression, the recollection of the memories of the past and the visions of the present which will give us the renewed strength to say:

United States! You put my people in jail, in foreign jails, in cold jails, for many, many years, to punish them, to rob them of their lives, for loving their country, for fighting for the freedom of our land, of Puerto Rico. But all these efforts, United States, will only serve, to make us remember, El Maestro, La Patria es valor y sacrificio, Oscar Collazo, Andres Figueroa Cordero, Lolita Lebron, Irvin Flores, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Juan Antonio Correjer... They are all with us, If they are not, It means, that the river has ceased to have water, the flower has ceased to have fragrance, the bird has ceased to fly, the land has ceased to have soil, and we have ceased to live, we have ceased to exist, then, without existence, it Does Not matter any more, But No, United States, we will continue to live, And my children and the children of my children and the children of my brother and sister, And the children of the children of my brother and sister, and the children of my nephew, and the children of the children of my nephew, the children of my niece, and the children of the children of my niece, and the children of my cousin, and the children of the children of my cousin, will continue to resist, and will continue to chant, Yanki, go home! Vieques si, marina no! we'll continue to fight, we'll continue to struggle for your destruction so that you may always remember, United States, Patria o muerte! ¡Venceremos!

Animals, Anarchy & the Grand Jury System

By Josh Harper

When I was 15, I experienced a turning point in my life when one day I saw my father beat my friend Max, who was a dog who lived with us. My father, who to this day stands as a constant reminder to me of the irreconcilable separation of authority and freedom, simply did not care about Max's pain, desires, or emotion. I began to see all around me humans' indifference and outright ignorance of the suffering of animals. The arrogance of most people is astounding- as one species among millions, how is it that we see ourselves as the only ones deserving of freedom?

The amazing thing, though, is that many of us obviously do not see ourselves as deserving of freedom. We passively accept everyday a world that offers us little joy, warmth, or excitement. The "animal rights movement" has often failed to consider that if dictating to an animal how to live their life from birth to death is cruel, it must also be cruel to do the same to a human. Very few animal activists consider schools to be prisons for example, or question the fact that most of us will work our lives away and sell off our freedom for an hourly wage. In the last few years I have tried with only moderate success to express these ideas to the activists I know. I felt as if what I was doing was getting no attention. I couldn't have guessed how wrong I was.

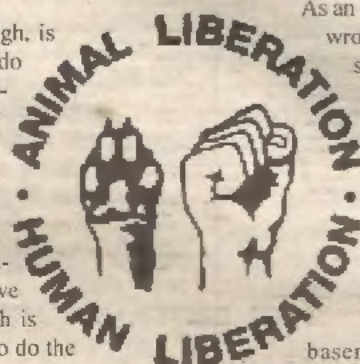
On May 20, 2000, I received a federal grand jury subpoena for an investigation taking place in Portland, OR. The inquisition would be looking into the actions of the Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberation Front. (For more information, see: www.enviroweb.org/

ALFIS/index2.shtml or www.nocompromise.org - eds.)

For those who don't know, grand juries strip away the already thin illusion of democracy by taking away your right to an attorney, your right to remain silent, and your right to hear evidence against yourself. You can be jailed for refusing to testify, even though you may not be a suspect and have not been convicted of any crime. The subpoena commanded me to appear on April 24. I sat one night and thought for along time about that: "You are commanded to appear..."

As an Anarchist, I knew it would be wrong of me to comply with the state. One day I walked outside and burned the subpoena and spat on the ashes. When April 24 rolled around, the district attorney was upset to find no one sitting in the witness seat, and I delivered a statement about green anarchism to the local media.

Right now I am sitting in a basement apartment wondering what will happen next. The grand jury is being renewed, meaning that federal marshals could come and arrest me at any time. I have no idea what they want from me, but I do know now that my activism has somehow caught their attention. At times I feel scared, but I know that backing down would be an act of cowardice. As Anarchists, we have so much to do. We will have to show courage to accomplish any of it. I hope that we are up for the task, and I hope that **ONWARD** can act as a resource to that end. Thanks for your support. (money can be sent to the Josh Harper Legal Fund c/o Animal Rights America, PO Box 469, Caldwell, NJ 07006 and earmarked for Josh)



Richmond Tent City Puts Anarchy into Practice

By Greg Wells

Anarchism is today and always has been a movement by the people for the people. It is a movement rooted in resistance. A movement of common folk, farmers, factory workers, immigrants, students, peasants and millions of Earth's inhabitants who long for a world where no one goes without. A world free from domination, slavery, militarism, oppression and all forms of the state and its various tentacles.

In my relatively short time in the struggle, I have traveled far and wide, attended lectures, discussions and workshops. I have organized in my neighborhood, in my city and in cities across the country in times of distress. I have read and studied the glorious and forgotten timeline of the people's movement. I have researched, written and compiled stories in newsletters, pamphlets and zines in order to share what I have learned and to better educate myself. Until August 28, 1998 I was still very much in doubt if Anarchism could truly work amongst a large, diverse group of people over an extended period of time.

The General Strike Collective was a radical grassroots community based Anarchist group that had been functioning in my hometown of Richmond, Virginia since around May Day 1996. The organization was primarily made up of young folks in their early twenties of whom most had moved to the Richmond area with the intent of creating a group of the make up of General Strike. I, myself, moved to Richmond in '96 also and hooked up with the folks from General Strike later on that year.

Of the early year's workload, a large majority of our time was spent organizing and building links to the homeless community of Richmond by standing in solidarity with those who rarely ever have anyone to stand with. Through working with Richmond Food Not Bombs, and a local homeless group A Society Without A Name (ASWAN), members of the collective began to learn and dissect the far reaching implications that the corrupt city government in alliance with the upper crust business and academic communities had planned for the homeless population in our city.

Over the course of several months in the early period of 1998, we began to seriously discuss and debate a plan of action against the Virginia

Commonwealth University (VCU), for their ongoing role in attempting to eradicate the homeless in our city. As we started to engage folks in conversation we learned of horrid instances where the VCU police department had physically and verbally threatened and intimidated homeless individuals in and around Monroe Park, of which the university, and the city, had jurisdiction. After working closely with ASWAN and Food Not Bombs, amongst scores

us to be. Summer seemed to fly by amidst scores of planning sessions, flyering campaigns, street work and alliance building. By the time late August rolled around, we found ourselves high spirited but still very much uncertain as to how in the world this dream of ours was ever going to work out.

Monroe Park was picked for a very simple and yet very powerful reason. It sits right in the middle of the heart of VCU and serves as a safe

council passed a restriction on public camping in all city parks. After that, the mere act of being homeless was in essence a perpetual violation of the law. With this as our motivation, we set out at 12 noon on the 28th of August to create an urban, Anarchist commune in the heart of our city.

August the 28th also was very strategically decided upon as a launch date for the event. The period immediately prior to the fall enrollment at the university is widely known throughout homeless ranks as sweep season. It is the time of year when the city, the university and wealthy civic groups crack down hard and continuously upon the downtrodden. Violations and arrests are made for panhandling, sleeping in public, large groups congregating or even merely looking suspicious. This entire process is carried out every year in an attempt of "cleansing the campus area of undesirables" so the affluent parents of Northern Virginia VCU enrollees will feel safe and secure in dropping off little junior in a big, scary city for the first time. That weekend parents and freshmen being dropped off at their dorms were forced to take a long hard look at the policies of VCU and the impact those policies are reeking upon our city.

As we arrived at the park and began to set up our encampment, numbers gradually grew over the course of the day. At first it was primarily the General Strike ranks along with other sectors of the radical scene. Towards the end of the work day the numbers increased significantly as nightfall approached. As homeless folks began to arrive in droves, many set back cautiously and studied what was transpiring. It was as if they were all waiting for some instructions on how to participate, how to communicate. Having been a veteran of the daily feeding programs I could sense the hesitancy on their parts to jump into all the work that we had to get ready for the evening.

Around 4 o'clock dinner was served and our vision was starting to take shape. Literature was being widely distributed. Folks were engaging in conversation all over the park. Food, clothes and sleeping gear were being distributed for free and the general mood of the park was one of solidarity and strength in numbers. The first real barrier to be broken was dealing with the droves of media that began swarming the park. They would arrive and inevitably ask to speak to the leader. We dispelled any myths of leadership by having an open invitation for any and all to share their thoughts with the media over the course of the weekend. In some cases, this was used as an attempt to discredit our cohesiveness, but ultimately it empowered a lot of folks in the park to take on a more vocal, proactive role over the next few days, as opposed to passive participation. We were becoming a family.

As nightfall crept upon us that first night, tension began to mount as to what role the cops were going to take regarding the sundown park curfew. Everyone in attendance was briefed and alerted to the potential risk for the violation. Yet nearly no one left. As kops in cruisers began swarming the park in rapid succession, we held our ground and created an open air party for all to take part in. Word has it the mayor sent orders to leave us be, realizing the public relations nightmare that kops coming in and rolling heads would have upon him and the council. Needless to say, we had already won.

The incredible and spontaneous nature of our encampment really began to take hold that first night as roaming and rotating bands of participants scoured the park on routine rounds to ensure that everyone was safe. Although the largest body of our camp was in one fairly tight corner of the park, our mere presence inspired late-night arrivals to sleep safely in all corners of the park. As morning broke, word began to spread around the city about what was taking place down at Monroe Park, that a wild mix of Anarchists and homeless and their allies had taken the park over and were running it on their terms. There began to be live news broadcasts, the paper ran a feature article and random sympathizers are constantly arriving with food, blankets, clothes and warm wishes. Our morale was deepening rapidly.

Another powerful occurrence was when homeless participants began distributing flyers and sweeping the city, demanding their friends come stand with us in our quest. The most straight forward attempt at this was when the

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Participants of Tent City stand in line for Food Not Bombs sharing

of other civil-rights groups, to overturn some city proposed anti-poor zoning ordinances the prior year, we felt the momentum was ours to run with, we did just that.

It was in the late spring of '98 that the collective decided unanimously to propagandize and organize a 4 day takeover of Monroe Park in the form of a tent city aimed at exposing VCU's ongoing meddling in the homeless community and rapidly increasing gentrification in the Carver Community just North of the main artery of the campus. As Anarchists it is our duty to go and be wherever the struggle needs

place, a sanctuary for the downtrodden to slip away from the grinding hustle of the city, the stifling summer heat, a place to get in a few hours sleep, have a bite to eat or just to catch up with a friend for a lively conversation. Ever since the park was the city's first fairgrounds in the 1850's it has been a place of tranquility, of meriment, a beautiful green space in the heart of the ever growing development of a major urban enclave. During the 1970's, 80's and early 90's the park was open for the increasing homeless population to camp out there over night. After a series of muggings in the early 90's, the city

Prison, the War on Drugs

By Jalil Muntaqim

It began over a decade ago. It was subtle, quiet and unnoticeable. The media played it up as the result of the drug epidemic. The public accepted it thinking they would be safer. Ten years later, the state and Federal government continue to laud its accomplishment and urge expansion of the cleansing process. With over 800,000 Black people in jails and prisons, the ethnic cleansing has become an economic strategy of Wall Street with private prisons on the stock market.

Although FBI statistics proclaim a decline in crime, prison construction has become a growing multi-billion dollar business. Black men and women have become commodities in an industry directly representative of slavery. The 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution actually indicates that slavery was not abolished, but was institutionalized in the criminal justice system.

With the revelation of racist police profiling, and the criminal justice system wrought with racism, it is easy to charge the practice of an American style of ethnic cleansing. Such a charge is especially ominous when considering new laws that permit children as young as 13 to be sentenced as adults, increase death penalty sanctions and greater restrictions on parole releases.

This country imprisons more of its citizens, about 1.5 million people, than any other institutionalized nation. Although Euro-Americans comprise 69% of those arrested, institutional racism in the criminal justice system incarcerates Blacks in disproportionate numbers. It imprisons African men 9 times more than Euro-Americans, and 4 times more than did apartheid South Africa. While Blacks comprise 58% of the prison system, they are only 12.5% of the entire population.

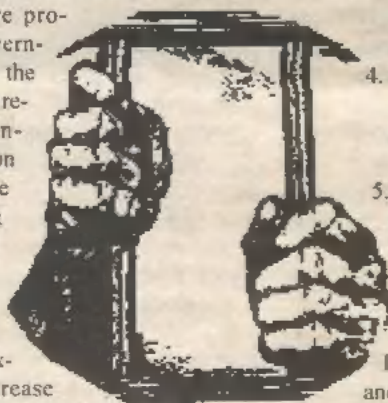
This reality is coupled with gentrification of Black communities, which are being de-

stroyed from the top down. Voting districts are being redrawn or annexed to eliminate the prospects of Black elected representatives. At the same time, real estate moguls under the guise of city and state interests gentrify predominate Black neighborhoods; entire communities are being displaced as part of the cleansing process. In addition, with right-wing roll back of affirmative action policies, Black enrollment in colleges, in job hirings and promotions and small business contracts has declined. Welfare to workfare programs have increased levels of impoverished single mothers.

Hence, the criminalization of poverty, if you're poor, unemployed and homeless, one is likely to suffer the penalties of incarceration. Although said socio-economic

conditions are produced by government policies, the corresponding result is the increase in prison building-- the new housing for poor and unemployed. As this is developing, there is the exponential increase of orphaned Black children burdening the foster care system.

While the Kosovo situation is overtly violent and disheartening, the American ethnic cleansing practices are just as devastating. It destroys families, uproot neighborhoods and create orphans under the misguided policy of population control, i.e. war on crime. Essentially, it can be argued the Black community has for over a decade been under direct attack of institutional racism via right-wing state and Federal government policies.



& Other Tools of American Ethnic Cleansing

Needless to say, the disproportionate number of Black imprisonment ultimately lowers the birth rate of the Black population. The genocidal implications are even more startling when considering the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Margaret Heckler, 1985 report on "Black and Minority Health," stating:

1. By year 2010, 40 percent of all African-Americans are predicated to have contracted AIDS; (AIDS is the leading cause of death between the age of 25 and 44 years old)
2. Lung Cancer claims the lives of 48 percent more African-American males than whites.
3. The infant mortality rate of African-Americans will be 20 deaths per 1,000 which is about twice that suffered by whites.
4. Homicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among African-American men between 25 and 44 years old, one in 22 African-American males will be murdered.
5. African-Americans suffer considerably more strokes than their white counterparts and are more than five times likely to die from these symptoms.

It should be added, there are more Black single parent households than ever and Black youth are consistently 35% to 50% unemployed. With a 58% Black prison population, it is estimated one of every three Black males will at some point in his life confront the criminal justice system. This is not surprising when considering racist police profiling across the country.

Given the reality of Black mortality from the cradle to the prison system, void a government sponsored and financed program to reverse these developments (ironically, after the Colorado high school shooting, President

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Iraq...

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have died due to the sanctions. The hardest hit are children and the elderly; the most vulnerable to lack of food, medicine and clean water.

Bombing Civilians

While sanctions are devastating, we can't understand them without looking at the intense bombing. Desert Storm was the heaviest bombing campaign in history, and the US and Britain have continued bombing Iraq.

The US and Britain have instituted "no fly zones" over the north and south of Iraq. The US and British military dominate the air space. Ostensibly, the US occupies this area in order to protect the people of Iraq from Saddam, yet the UN has never approved these zones.

When bombing, anything of civilian use can be considered a target. Schools, neighborhoods, roads, bridges, cars, food silos, farms, herds of sheep, irrigation systems, water treatment plants, power plants, factories, trucks, bomb shelters, and hotels have all been bombed.

The US uses assorted weaponry in order to carry out these operations. Smart bombs target specific areas and cluster bombs hit a broader range of targets as seen in the devastation caused by bombs to the Al-Mariyah bomb shelter. The US bombed it with smart bombs in the beginning of Desert Storm. A mother who lost all seven of her children due to this bombing gave me a tour of the shelter. She was not in the shelter at the time, and returned to find all of her kids murdered by the US government. She has not left the shelter since and now gives tours of the area.

The shelter was chemical weapons-proof and used to house children under 16 and their mothers. The US obtained the building plans through the European builder that constructed it and used the plans to find its weak point. They dropped one smart bomb onto the airshaft, blowing it open, and then dropped another through the newly formed hole into the shelter. The bomb exploded at the floor of the building. The mothers and children closest to the blast were immediately incinerated, leaving only their shadows on the wall. The majority of the people died in boiling water that erupted from nearby water tanks. 7 children blasted outside the door were spared; the remaining 900 were killed. There is no evidence this site was used to house military equipment or personnel.

Cluster bombs, the bomb version of shotguns, are internationally illegal because of the intense human suffering they cause. When they explode, they spray into hundreds of separate exploding pellets. They are fairly incapable of doing structural damage to buildings or military equipment; their only purpose is to destroy soft tissue, i.e. human flesh. The US has continually used cluster bombs in major cities, injuring and killing hundreds of civilians. While I was in Iraq, part of my delegation went to Mosul, a town inside the No Fly Zone, and visited a school recently hit by a cluster bomb. The bomb landed across the street from the school at 2pm. Several kids under the age of ten were hospitalized after being hit with shrapnel. The US government says military strikes are only done in retaliation to Iraqi misconduct, yet the location and time of retaliations may be unrelated to the Iraqi act. The State Department claims that this particular school bombing was retaliation to an Iraqi radar lock on a US jet.

The US also uses depleted uranium (radioactive waste) in its attacks. Many people, particularly the Iraqi government and health professionals, criticize the use of uranium because of its high probability of causing cancer. Despite worldwide protests, the US insists on using the waste to coat bullets and computer-guided weapons. Desert Storm and the continuing military attacks have thoroughly covered the country with this dangerous material. Uranium dust is found all over as the dry weather and sandstorms spread the carcinogen throughout the country. A 1997 study showed that 50% of Iraqi people will have some sort of cancer in the next 50 years. Medical experts and peace advocates also point to depleted uranium as the cause of "Gulf War Syndrome," where many soldiers fighting in Desert Storm suffer from permanent health problems. The health effects have already manifested in Iraq with extremely high rates of leukemia and skin cancer.

Bombs have destroyed Iraq's infrastructure. The continual bombings have caused huge dif-

ficulty with domestic production of clean water, food, medicine, and spare parts. Water treatment plants have been destroyed, making clean water impossible. Trucks and food silos were bombed, making it difficult for the Iraqi government to store and distribute food. The US bombed pharmaceutical plants, factories, irrigation systems, farms and livestock preventing Iraq from being self-sufficient and able to meet the basic needs of its people.

When looking at the sanctions, we must realize what the bombings have done to the Iraqi people, who are extremely vulnerable because their already low food and medicine supply, the infrastructure, and production were destroyed. They suffer the psychological and physical effects of a war with the US where children are bombed, families are threatened, and the basic needs of life are stripped away. It is these conditions where sanctions come in.



50 six-year olds cram into an Iraqi classroom with no school supplies.

Sanctions Have Destroyed Iraq

The sanctions take an already vulnerable population and exponentially worsened things by not allowing in products.

The people of Iraq suffer from an extreme lack of food. The Iraqi government instituted a distribution system before the sanctions to ensure that everyone in the country gets adequate supplies. A central food center in Baghdad collects all the food reserves which are then distributed to shops around the country where people buy food with government funded coupons. The UN has commended the Iraqi government for its distribution system. Yet malnutrition remains a serious problem from sheer lack of food.

In Iraq, every child I saw was skinny. They all looked a few years younger than they actually were and an unusual amount were noticeably short. The numbers support this observation. In 1996, 68% of children under the age of five were malnourished. 31% were considered to have chronic malnutrition, 26% were under weight, and 11% were considered wasting. Over 1 million children have become victims of the US led sanctions; they don't have enough food during the most critical years of their lives.

Before the sanctions, the average person in Iraq got 3,372 calories per day. That is equivalent to the average person in Europe. In 1990, it dipped down to 3,150 calories per day. From 1993 until 1995, just a few years after the sanctions, food intake was down to 2,268. Calories went down as low as 1,000 per day before the US succumbed to pressure and allowed more food into Iraq through the "Oil for Food" program. While calories have gone up, nutritional levels have not. People still don't get balanced diets. For example, daily protein has fallen over 33%. The whole nation of Iraq is starving. This is the face of sanctions.

Malnutrition is compounded by the utter lack of medicine. When I was in Iraq, I went to two different hospitals. We also had a team of doctors who spent a good portion of the week going to children's hospitals, union medical centers, general hospitals, and surgery rooms. Seeing these hospitals was one of the most shocking experiences of my life. The hospitals were packed with kids wasting away. There was a mother on every bed and doctors hanging about, but there was nothing anybody could do; there just isn't any medicine. There are no diagnostic machines like x-rays and computers because they are classified as chemical weapons. Medicine is incredibly scarce. If doctors are lucky enough to have medicine, they must stretch a 2 or 3 day supply into a month. Equipment is outdated, out of shape, and broken.

Patients also suffer from the lack of electricity. Rooms are too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter. Curtains are scarce and some rooms have the windows painted black to keep

the light out. Clean linens are rare and we saw one boy using a pillow stained with blood. People also suffer from lack of anesthesia. Many surgeries that would normally require anesthesia are performed without it, and others surgeries aren't performed. The most shocking part of the experience is the amount of children who die from easily treatable diseases. Half of the children I saw in the hospital were dying from diarrhea. They needed a simple rehydration pill, but none were available. So the children die due to the sanctions.

The water systems are inadequate. Due to the sanctions, the parts in the water system that need to be replaced every 5 years haven't had been replaced in over 10 years. Pipes and pumps needing repair are classified as chemical weapons. I visited one of the few water treatment plants in Baghdad. Every step in the process has been affected by the sanctions. The treatment center had broken pipes, leaks, and not enough materials. Because of the sanctions, the water is poisonous and many children get and die from diarrhea and other sicknesses because of the lack of potable water.

The problem is compounded by the lack of garbage collectors. Before the war, there were 1,300; now there are 18. Trash is strewn about the outskirts of the city and much of it gets into the water.

The sanctions also effect the education system. The lack of school materials along with impoverished health conditions and the emotional stress of war make quality education almost impossible. Students don't have books, paper, chalk, pencils or desks. 5 to 20 students often share a single textbook and do all their work on the chalkboard. The universities cannot provide current hands-on training because there is no modern equipment.

Everything in Iraq has been affected by the sanctions. The electricity is regularly turned off, traffic lights don't work, cars have broken windshields, telephones are extremely hard to find, and there are no computers or internet.

The sanctions have caused catastrophe for the people of Iraq. Annual deaths from respiratory infection, diarrhea, gastroenteritis and malnutrition for children under the age of five rose ten-fold from 7,110 deaths in 1989 to 73,572 in 1999 (from January to November). Members of the population with serious chronic illnesses requiring regular medication have little chance of survival, approaching 100% death rate for some illnesses where survival rates were as high as 95% before sanctions. Those who live have little prospect of a healthy life. Underweight births have risen radically every year. In 1990, 4.5% of babies were underweight (under 2.5 kg) compared to 24.1% of babies in 1999. Malnutrition diseases have also skyrocketed. Kwashiorkor only appears in the very worst conditions around the world. Before the sanctions, most doctors had never seen it. Now it's a major health crisis, increasing 60 times from the beginning of the sanctions to 30,232 by 1998. Protein, calorie and vitamin deficiency, and malnutrition jumped twenty times between 1990 and 1998, going from 96,809 cases to 1,910,309. These numbers have gone up every year since the beginning of the sanctions, and will continue to rise until we end the war.

Implications

The sanctions are destroying an entire generation. Most of the children who grow up during the sanctions were not even alive when the sanctions began, yet they are the ones the sanctions attack. They are the ones who are born underweight, grow up starving, see their friends die in hospitals, go to school without textbooks, and breathe depleted uranium during critical growth years. Children need enough food and water, safety, and school supplies, but Iraqi children are growing up unhealthy and uneducated. In 30 years, Iraqis will all be short from lack of nourishment, sick from lack of medicine and a clean environment, and mentally taxed by lack of education and the emotional trauma of war. Sanctions are a brutal war against a civilian

population; people in Iraq become military targets solely because they live in Iraq.

The US government knows the effects of sanctions. Yet they choose to continue their brutal war against the people of Iraq.

Uncovering the Lies

Over the years, the US government has used a number of excuses to justify the genocide of Iraq. In 1990 and 1991, President Bush claimed Iraq was being bombed and sanctioned in order to force the Iraqi military to pull out of Kuwait. But when Iraqi forces left Kuwait in 1991, the US changed its justification and claimed that sanctions were necessary because Iraq has chemical weapons. This argument is particularly tenuous because it the US sold these weapons to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war. The US government was fully supportive of Iraq and continued to give military and financial aid when Iraq used these weapons against the Kurdish minority in the North. Further, the US government has the biggest chemical arsenal in the world, supports several countries that are building nuclear and chemical stockpiles, and regularly uses depleted uranium in the bombing of Iraq. Raymond Zalinkas, Associate Professor at the Biotechnology Institute at the University of Maryland and a former UN Weapons Inspector in Iraq told NPR in 1995: "UNSCOM has destroyed all the chemical facilities, the chemical weapons facilities, and also all known chemical weapons. ...In the biological area, UNSCOM has destroyed the dedicated biological weapons facility at al-Hakam, plus other ones at other institutes. And as far as we know, they have no biological weapons stored up." Similarly, Scott Ritter, a former Weapons Inspector who resigned in protest of the sanctions: "Iraq simply lacks the stocks of chemical and biological agent needed to have any militarily significant effect." The experts agree: Iraq is not a military threat, yet the sanctions continue.

In reaction to the huge numbers of victims and the growing world protest, the US government has led a smear campaign against Saddam Hussein. Madeline Albright, US Secretary of State, along with other military and government leaders, say Saddam is hoarding food. This stands in stark contrast to UN reports by the World Health Organization and the World Food Program where the Iraqi government has been commended; both UN organizations gave an 'A' rating to the Iraqi government for its distribution of food and medicine. Contrary to US propaganda, Iraq has an excellent history of social services. Before the war, the people of Iraq had the highest standard of living in the Middle East. In addition to the free food, Iraq also has free medical and dental care, free education through the Ph.D. level, subsidized and often-free housing, a 36-hour work week with paid lunch break and paid lunch, 2 weeks sick pay and 2 weeks vacation.

The "Oil for Food" bill was passed in the United Nations in 1996 as a way to address the criticisms of the sanctions yet keep them in place. The US government touts the resolution as providing food to Iraq, and argues that it solves the problems of sanctions. However, it fails to provide the necessary supplies that the people of Iraq need. Through the resolution, Iraq is allowed to sell a nominal amount of oil in exchange for UN Security Council Committee 661 approved contracts. Currently, the UN is allowing Iraq to sell \$5.26 billion worth of oil every six months.

However, Iraq - as confirmed by a UN team of experts - cannot pump more than \$4 billion worth of oil because of the deterioration of oil field equipment under sanctions and the regular bombings of oil equipment. After money is also taken out of oil sales to pay war reparations, UN costs and US corporations, Iraq is left with \$.25 per person per day. Out of that, half of the contracts are denied or delayed by the UN committee, so Iraq must use 12.5 cents per person per day to rebuild its infrastructure, feed the people, provide medicine, and the rest



A little girl stands over a stream of raw sewage. Iraqi waste treatment facilities have all been bombed.

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Reclaiming Our History: Know the Past, Fight for the Future

This will be a regular feature in ONWARD; we plan on highlighting well known and not-so-well known organizations and individuals throughout our history; if we know our history, we can build on the success of- and learn from the failures of- our predecessors. We will no longer reinvent the revolutionary wheel. We will be that much closer to achieving our goals. — eds.

Louise Michel

By Jayacintha Danaswamy

From <http://surf.to/anarchism>

Louise Michel was born on 29th May 1830 and raised by her mother and paternal grandparents. Her love and understanding of everything downtrodden, human and animal alike, developed from her empathy with her childhood world. Her compassion and sensitivity to suffering grew, as she grew and, along with her instinct to rebel against social inequalities, led her along the revolutionary path.

While a teacher, she dreamed of going to Paris. Only there, she felt, could people fight the empire. In Paris, she concentrated on teaching, writing poetry and reading, attending lectures in her free time to quench her thirst for knowledge. While walking through the streets of Paris, she saw more victims of impoverished Parisian society. She expressed how these people touched her, in her poetry: "I have seen criminals and whores/ And spoken with them. Now I inquire/ If you believe them made as now they are/ To drag their rags in blood and mire/ Preordained, an evil race?/ You to whom all men are prey/ Have made them what they are today."

War with Prussia

On 14th July 1870, war broke out between France and Germany; Paris was besieged by the Prussian armies. Louise was arrested for the first time with Andre Leo, after organising a group of volunteers to go aid Strasbourg in one last stand against the Prussian armies. After insisting they receive arms, they were arrested at the Hotel de Ville, a building the acting government occupied.

She was released on 27th September and stayed active and optimistic, though Strasbourg had just fallen to the Prussians. She was president of Montmartre Women's Vigilance Committee who aimed to provide shelter and food for all in need. In December, she was arrested again and accused of organising a demonstration in front of the Hotel de Ville. She said "I couldn't have organised any demonstration to speak to the government, because I no longer

recognised that government".

In January 1871, Paris surrendered to the Prussians. The French elected a new government with a large majority of monarchists, who planned to overthrow the national guard and arrest republicans. They failed, as the people opposed them, and fled to Versailles. On 18th March 1871, the people of Paris reclaimed their city, for the people. They set up an independent 'commune' with the people themselves - rather than a corrupt, bourgeois government - controlling the destiny of the city.

The Paris Commune

This became known as the Paris Commune. It was a social revolution to create freedom and equality for all the people of Paris. Like many others, Louise gave her total self to the revolution, fighting on the barricades, devoting herself to the cause and eagerly willing to sacrifice her life for the "conquest of freedom." In her memoirs, she describes the struggle: "In my mind I feel the soft darkness of a spring night. It is May 1871, and I see the red reflection of flames. It is Paris afire. That fire is a dawn".

After the Commune fell, Louise turned herself in when the state threatened to shoot her mother. She was marched, along with other prisoners active in the commune, from Versailles to Satory. Along the way, some were woken in the middle of the night, made to dig their own graves and then shot. In total, about thirty thousand men, women and children were executed.

On 16th December 1871, Louise, 36, was brought to trial by the Versailles Government and accused of trying to overthrow the government; encouraging citizens to arm themselves; possession and use of weapons, and wearing a military uniform; forgery of a document; using a false document; planning to assassinate hostages; illegal arrests, torturing and killing.

As her defence, she said: "I do not wish to defend myself, I do not wish to be defended. I belong completely to the social responsibility



for all my actions. I accept it completely and without reservations. I wished to oppose the invader from Versailles with a barrier of flames. I had no accomplices in this action. I acted on my own initiative. I am told that I am an accomplice of the Commune. Certainly, yes, since the Commune wanted more than anything else the social revolution, and since the social revolution is the dearest of my desires... the Commune, which by the way had nothing to do with murders and arson. [S]ince it seems that any heart which beats for freedom has the right only to a lump of lead, I too claim my share. If you let me live, I shall never stop crying for revenge and I shall avenge my brothers. I have finished. If you are not cowards, kill me!"

Deported from France

Sentenced to lifetime deportation, Louise went to New Caledonia on 8th August 1873. During this journey, she met Natalie Lemel, who introduced her to Anarchism. The conditions in New Caledonia were harsh: a serious food shortage and little medical care. After five years in exile, she was allowed to teach the Kanaks (the indigenous people), and the children of colonists. She got to know and respect the Kanaks. Her support for their struggles against French invasion and racism is remembered today in the capital city, Noumea, through a museum dedicated to Anarchism.

In 1880, the French Government granted amnesty for the prisoners of the Paris Commune and after six and a half years in exile, Louise travelled home. On 21st November, she spoke at her first public meeting in Paris. Her speeches were inspirational and effective. "It is the people who will deliver us from the men who have been corrupting us, and the people themselves will win their liberty."

During this time, she wrote much on the effects of strikes and put a lot of work and energy into setting up a soup kitchen to feed the out of work and starving returning exiles.

Arrested again

In January 1882, Louise was arrested and falsely charged with insulting policemen and sentenced to two weeks in prison. After her release, she gave lectures throughout Europe. Her movements were watched by police at all times.

On her return home, she continued touring through France raising money for women spinners on strike in Lille.

On 9th March 1883, after a large demonstration at the Esplanade of Les Invalides, Louise led a large number of people in a march across Paris. There were three incidents of loaves of bread being looted from bakers' shops. After going into hiding for three weeks, she turned herself in. She was charged with having been one of "the leaders and instigators of looting committed by a band."

Imprisoned again

Louise was condemned to six years of solitary confinement, and ten years of police supervision. Of this event, she said: "It is not a question of bread crumbs. What is at stake is the harvest of an entire world, a harvest necessary to the whole future human race, one without exploiters and without exploited".

While in prison, she continuously asked the authorities to be moved nearer her sick mother in Paris. Eventually, she was moved to Paris to attend her dying mother's bedside in her last days. Her mother's death was a severe blow.

She was pardoned and freed from prison the following January. Two years later, while giving a speech, Louise was shot behind her left ear. At her would-be assassin's trial, Louise defended him, saying "he was misled by an evil society". In the last few years of her life, she toured around France promoting Anarchism. After returning from Algeria, she fell seriously ill in Marseilles and died on 9th January 1905.

Her funeral was a large occasion, with red flags and two thousand mourners. Memorial services took place all over France, and in London. She spent her life fighting against the injustices of society, had sacrificed herself and passionately given her all to the revolution. "We revolutionaries aren't just chasing a scarlet flag. What we pursue is an awakening of liberty, old or new. It is the ancient Communes of France, it is 1703; it is June 1848; it is 1871. Most especially it is the next revolution which is advancing under this dawn". The little girl who listened to her grandfather's stories of the heroes of old had now become a legend herself.

THE Black Liberation Army part 1

By Jalil Muntaqim

"Hide nothing from the masses of our people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories...." PAIGC-1965

The history of our national liberation struggle is one of the most important factors upon which the political party(s), the oppressed masses and the liberation armed forces may understand the nature of their oppression and the task before them towards independence and freedom.

In this article, I will present the general history of the evolution of the Black Liberation Army. This will be a brief historical overview not providing specific historical data in order to protect people who are either functioning in or no longer associated with the BLA. The Black Liberation Army is a politico-military organization, whose primary objective is to fight for the independence and self-determination of Afrikan people in the United States. The political determination of the BLA evolved out of the now defunct Black Panther Party.

It was in October 1966, with the advent of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, that the question of armed struggle and resistance to racist oppression emerged as a plausible strategical maneuver in the developing liberation movement. In late 1968/early 1969, the forming of a Black underground first began. From California to Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, armed units were formed in rural areas, trained and caches were established. In Oakland, San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, Ohio, and New York, Black Panther Party offices were established to formulate a political relationship with the oppressed Black masses in these and other communities across the country. From 1969 to 1972, the BPP came under vicious attack by the State and Federal government. The government (FBI, CIA and local police departments) employed COINTELPRO (CounterIntelligence Program) as a means to destroy the above ground political apparatus that fielded the Black underground. But it wasn't until 1969 that the BPP began its purge of many of its most trusted and militant members, many of who eventually joined the Black underground. By 1971, contradictions perpetuated by COINTELPRO forces in the leadership of the BPP caused the split between Newton and Cleaver, which eventually split the entire Black Panther Party into two major factions. It was this BPP split and factionalism that determined the fielding of the Black underground would begin to serve its primary purpose (along with conditions presented by the State armed offensive to liquidate the Party). This is not to say that armed action against

the State did not occur by the Black underground prior to the split. On the contrary, by 1971, the Black underground was becoming rich in experience in the tactics of armed expropriations, sabotage, and ambush assaults. It must be said that, prior to the split, the Black underground was the official armed wing of the above ground political apparatus, and thereby had to maintain restraint in its military activity. This was very well for the Black underground; although in many areas experienced in tactical military guerrilla warfare, it was still infantile politically, and although becoming organizationally wielded as a fighting apparatus, it did not establish an infrastructure completely autonomous from the above ground BPP cadres and Party chapters. This, in turn, became one of the major detriments of the Black underground after the split of the Black Panther Party.

Based upon the split and factionalism in the BPP, and heightened repression by the State, the Black underground was ordered to begin establishing the capacity to take the "defensive-offensive" in developing urban guerrilla warfare. Hence, in 1971, the name Black Liberation Army (or Afro-American Liberation Army) surfaced as the nucleus of Black guerrilla fighters across the United States. This is not to say that the name Black Liberation Army was first used in 1971, for in late 1968, during a student strike and demonstration in Mexico City, many students and demonstrators were killed by Mexican police. One of those students was reported to have had a piece of paper in his pocket upon which was written the name Black Liberation Army. Whether or not there was a connection to the fielding of the Black underground with the uprising in Mexico in 1968 is unknown.

Since the split in the BPP and the call of the "defensive-offensive" commenced, the Black underground, which in May of 1971 born the name Black Liberation Army, had committed many armed attacks against the States as part of the BPP (and after the split) many of which are unrecorded. Following is the Justice Department-LEAA Task Force report on BLA activity (it should be noted these reports were recorded by the State according to when they captured, killed or in some way received information concerning BLA activity, and therefore one-sided and by no means indicated all BLA activity during this time).

1970: San Francisco, CA, Oct. 22- An antipersonnel time bomb explodes outside a church, showering steel shrapnel on mourn-

ers of a patrolman slain in a bank holdup; no one is injured. The BLA is suspected.

1971: Hunter's Point, CA, Jan. 13- A police officer is shot by BLA member.

San Fran., CA, Jan. 19- Two police officers are wounded by BLA members.

San Fran., CA, Mar. 30- There is a BLA attempt to bomb a police station.

NYC, NY, May 19- Two Black men lure patrolmen Curry and Binetti by driving the wrong way and ignoring a traffic light; when apprehended the driver drops down and the passenger fires a machine gun at the doors and windows of the patrol car; the BLA is suspected.

Harlem, NY, May 21- Patrolmen Piagentini and Waverly Jones are killed in an ambush by alleged members of the BLA.

NYC, NY, June 5- Four men associated with the BLA attempted to hold up Triple O night club. One cab driver is killed.

NYC, NY, June 18- BLA members rob a bank for funds. Aug. - Twenty BLA members leave New York City and rent a farmhouse in Fayetteville, GA., where they conduct a guerrilla warfare school for one month, during which they held up a bank and killed an Atlanta policeman.

Queens, NY, Aug. 23- The Bankers Trust Company is robbed; BLA members are identified as participants.

SF, CA, Aug. 28- Two BLA members attempt to machine gun a San Francisco police patrol car. After an exchange of gunfire, they are apprehended. The service revolver of slain New York City patrolman Waverly Jones is found in their possession.

SF, CA, Aug. 29- A police sergeant is killed at his desk when two black men fire repeated blasts into the Ingelside police station; the BLA is suspected.

Atlanta, GA, Oct. 7- The Peters Street branch of Fulton National Bank is robbed, reportedly by the BLA.

Atlanta, GA, Nov. 3- Officer James Richard Greene is shot in a paddy-wagon 3 miles from a residence used by the BLA, believed responsible for the shooting.

Atlanta, GA, Dec. 12- Three reported BLA members and two other prisoners escape from the DeKalb County Jail.

NYC, NY, Dec. 21- Two police notice suspicious car near Bankers Trust Company in Queens; when they approach the car, it speeds away, after individuals in the car roll a grenade towards the police car; the grenade explodes, causing considerable dam-

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Worldwide Action Reports

This section was originally going to be much larger and include more reports, but we had to limit ourselves due to space. It is heart warming to hear of all the actions that are occurring all over the world. It is great to know that no matter how hard we try, we will never be able to fit a complete, or even comprehensive listing of Worldwide Action Reports, though we hope to try to include interesting reports whenever we find them. For more information, check out: www.indymedia.org, www.infoshop.org, www.ainfos.tao.ca, theEarthFirstJournal.com, NationTime.com, NoCompromise.com, and anything else you can get your hands on! See you in the streets...

SURREY, UK-- Residents celebrate as McDonald's pulls out after a 552-day occupation of a site proposed for a new store.

On Sunday, 13 Dec. 1998, residents in Hinchley Wood, Surrey moved caravans on to the car park of loved local pub, 'The Hinchley Wood' which had been leased by McDonald's. They aimed to occupy the site and stop it from being turned into a new store. After exactly 18 months of controversy and determined opposition, McDonald's gave up and handed back the lease on the pub to the original owners. On June 16th 2000, after an incredible 552-day, 24hr-a-day continuous occupation, (possibly the longest protest occupation of its kind) local villagers organised as Residents Against McDonald's (RAM) moved their caravans off the site and celebrated a historic victory.

McLibel Support Campaign- 5 Caledonian Road, London, N1 9DX, UK. Tel/Fax: +44 (207) 713 1269 E-mail: mclibel@globalnet.co.uk Web: <http://www.mcspotlight.org>

CIUDAD DE ORURO, BOLIVIA-- Villagers from Chuquibambilla were tear-gassed June 15, 2000 in a protest against oil leaking from a pipeline owned by Transredes (a Bolivian subsidiary of Enron-Shell) that is destroying their land and polluting a nearby river.

Due to the company's negligence, the pipeline ruptured on May 31, causing a large amount of oil to spill into an irrigation channel. The spill spread to 200km of rivers and irrigation canals used for watering crops. This affected drinking and irrigation water used by more than 127 rural farming communities. Enron-Shell said it would compensate the communities, but refused to dig water wells or make up for the destruction of forage for the animals. The company's position was supported by the Banzer government.

The rural people from Altiplano brought their dead sheep to the city of Oruro to prove the seriousness of the contamination. When the police attacked them, they threw sticks, rocks and fetuses from the sheep that had died from the contamination. They later went to the Enron-Shell offices, where they broke windows, threw

molotov cocktails and stones, and tried to force open the entrance with poles and crowbars.

The police ordered them to disperse, and attacked them with gas, but the villagers had water to help them withstand it. They threw themselves on the ground, and it took some time for the police to move them. There have been many meetings between the multinational representatives and the rural people, who are demanding forage for their animals and water for drinking. But, up until now, nothing has been done to meet their demands.

The villagers have been demonstrating outside the offices of the oil pipeline company with signs reading: "Death to Transredes, End the Contamination." In reprisal, the company has announced that it would suspend its services in the region.

Juventudes Libertarias (Libertarian Youth), juventudes_libertarias@latinmail.com

EUGENE, OR--

A year after a J18 re-claim the streets resulted in the 7-year imprisonment of

Anarchist Robert Thaxton, hundreds of Anarchists and anti-capitalists gathered and marched in downtown Eugene. Dozens of officers in riot gear broke up a crowd playing a game in the street, firing several beanbag rounds from shotguns before dividing the crowd into smaller groups. Confrontations with police continued at the park where people gathered before and after the march. At least 22 people were arrested.

On Saturday night, police arrested 40 Anarchists who took to the streets after watching a video of the WTO protests in Seattle to minimize the amount of people participating in J18.

J18's events included a puppet show reenactment of last J18 in the park where activists were tear-gassed. Later on, a brief confronta-

tion occurred as the result of a bystander's anger at the burning of an American flag.

MILLAU, FRANCE-- The anti-globalization movement brought 47,000 protesters, and 120,000 concert goers to support José Bové and his 10 comrades of the French Peasant Confederation on trial for the dismantling of a McDonald's restaurant as an anti-globalization protest.

"Yes, this action was illegal. Yes, this is serious, and that's why I assume full responsibility. The only regret I have now is that I wasn't able to destroy more of it. These actions will stop when this mad logic comes to a halt," says Bové.

This weekend took Bové and his comrades off the stand and put the issue of globalization at the forefront of political discussion. The French state was so embarrassed that it has delayed verdict of Bové and company until September. Nothing less than an acquittal will satisfy the supporters who will return to Millau next year when the town becomes the venue for the European anti-globalization forum.

Bové, speaking at a previous trial stated "Yes, this action was illegal, but I lay claim to it because it was legitimate. I don't demand clemency, but justice. Either we have acted in everyone's interest and you will acquit us, or we have shaken the establishment and in that case you will punish us."

You can find more info at www.france.indymedia.org and www.mcspotlight.org



Worldwide, anti-globalization protests are growing in size, creativity and militance.

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UPCOMING!

September 11: Shut Down the World Economic Forum in Melbourne!

The S11 Call: Stand up for Global Justice! On September 11-13th, the World Economic Forum (WEF) will hold its Asia-Pacific Economic Summit. Like the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the IMF/World Bank, the World Economic Forum is a means of promoting economic and social policies that will benefit the rich and the powerful at the expense of the majority of the world's people and the environment. For more info: <http://www.s11.org>

September 26: The Next Global Day of Action Against Capitalism!

September 26-28 the IMF and World Bank are holding their 55th annual summit in Prague. A mass mobilisation to Prague is beginning. On September 26, peoples of the world will express their opposition to the World Bank and the IMF. Peoples of the world will join together in solidarity with the demonstrators in Prague.

The S26 Global Day of Action comes after the success of the global Days of Action against Capitalism on June 18 and November 30, 1999 and May 1, 2000. S26 is in the same spirit. Through those Days, our networks grew, we learned much, and many new people engaged themselves.

As before, S26 will be organised in a non-hierarchical way, with a decentralised and informal network of grassroots groups employing non-authoritarian, directly democratic forms of organisation, struggle independent of the social, political and economic institutions of the capitalist system, and effect change directly through our own action. Each event or action will be organised autonomously by each group, while coalitions of various movements and groups can be formed at local, regional, and national levels.

The process of building our movements can and should be continued through further global days of action against capitalism in the future. For more info: www.s26.org

Black Liberation Army ...

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age towards the police car, and injuring the policemen; two suspects are identified as BLA members.

Brooklyn, NY, Dec. 31- BLA members engage in a shoot-out with a rival group of offices of Youth in Action.

Odessa, FL- BLA member is killed in shoot-out with FBI.

1972: Houston, TX, Jan. 12- Members of the BLA are charged for shooting and wounding off-duty Housing Police detectives.

Philadelphia, PA, Jan. 19- Two BLA members are arrested with two suitcases containing guns.

NYC, NY, Jan. 27- In the morning two patrolmen notice a car going through two red lights; when they approach to ask for a driver's license, the driver starts shooting; one patrolman is seriously wounded. In the evening, two policemen, Gregory Foster and Rocco Laurie, are shot in the back by at least three persons; four suspects in the case are members of the BLA; one suspect is later killed in a street battle with St. Louis police; the recovered pistol matches Laurie's.

St. Louis, MO, Feb. 16- A Black Liberation Army member, tied to the shooting of Foster and Laurie, is killed in a gun battle with police; two others are arrested.

Columbia, SC, May 10- Four BLA members arrested with guns. **Newark, NJ, Aug. 8-** BLA member who escapes after shooting sergeant and patrolmen on April 19, 1971, is captured.

Brooklyn, NY, Sept. 9- Three BLA members, including one who escaped from DeKalb County, Ga. jail are arrested.

LA, CA, Oct. 7- Police car bombing claimed by Afro-American Liberation Army.

Brooklyn, NY, Dec. 28- A bar owner kidnapped by the BLA and held for \$20,000 ransom.

1973: Brooklyn, NY, Jan. 2- During the robbery of a social club, BLA members shoot and kill a victim.

Brooklyn, NY, Jan. 10- After confronted on a subway station by a patrolman, a BLA member fires a shot and escapes in the tunnel.

Brooklyn, NY, Jan. 12- Two housing detectives are shot in front of a bar after stopping two BLA members.

Brooklyn, NY, Jan. 23- Two wanted BLA members are shot and

killed by members of New York City police department after they are trapped in a bar. Two detectives are wounded.

Brooklyn, NY, Jan. 25- Two patrolmen brothers assigned to same case are machine gunned by the BLA.

Queens, NY, Jan. 28- Two patrolmen on patrol are machine gunned by the BLA.

Bronx, NY, Feb. 9- Members of the BLA rob a bank.

Brooklyn, NY, Feb. 23- Two BLA members arrested with a carload of explosives.

Brooklyn, NY, Mar. 2- A group of BLA members, stopped by officers looking for a robbery suspect, engages the officers in a gun battle.

Bronx, NY, Mar. 6- Three BLA members are recognized by two detectives, and engage them in a gun battle. BLA members are joined by two more and escape by stealing a car and machine gunning a police radio car.

Brooklyn, NY, Mar. 27- BLA members rob a supermarket.

Queens, NY, Apr. 10- BLA members rob a bank.

Brooklyn, NY, Apr. 12- Two telephone company men held at gun point by the BLA when they are suspected of being police. They are told that they would be killed if they have guns, radio or shields.

New Jersey Turnpike, May 2- Members of the BLA are arrested after a shoot-out; one State patrolman is killed, one BLA member is wounded, one BLA member dies, the driver; one escapes, but is subsequently captured in East Brunswick, NJ. **Mount Vernon, NY, May 19-** Two policemen are shot when they stop three BLA members pulling a stick-up.

NYC, NY, June 5- a transit detective is killed when he stops two BLA members from entering without paying. Before he died he shot both of them; one is captured, and the other escapes.

Brooklyn, NY, June 7- A BLA member is captured by New York City Police and FBI.

Brooklyn, NY, June 8- Two other BLA members are captured.

Bronx, NY, July 18- BLA members rob a bank.

New Orleans, LA, Sept. 2- Members of New York City police department, New Orleans police department and FBI capture a BLA member.

NYC, NY, Sept. 27- BLA member is charged with the murder of Patrolman Foster and Laurie; he escapes from King's County Hospital, but is captured on October 3.

NYC, NY, Nov. 7- BLA member is arrested as he attempts to turn himself in for being absent without leave from the Army.

Bronx, NY, Nov. 14- BLA member slain after three years of pursuit by police; this member is the seventh BLA member to die in police shoot-out, 18 others have been arrested.

NYC, NY, Dec. 27- Three BLA sympathizers are caught attempting to free BLA members from the Tombs when police see one of them emerging from a sewer manhole two blocks away, outside the corrections department design and engineering unit that houses blueprints.

1974: NYC, NY, Apr. 17, The Tombs- Four BLA sympathizers, armed with two handguns and acetylene torch attempt to free three BLA members; they flee when torch runs out of fuel.

NYC, NY, May 3- After failing to release prisoners at the Tombs, BLA members flee to New Haven, Connecticut where they rob a bank and shoot a policeman. Three are captured, others escape. **NYC, NY, June 2-** BLA members attempt to shoot two policemen on the Delaware Bridge, and are arrested; they have a large supply of guns.

Brooklyn, NY, Aug. 5- A female is arrested after attempting to smuggle hacksaw blades to BLA prisoners.

Brooklyn, NY, Aug. 15- One BLA member escapes, one is shot, and a third gives up after an escape attempt. The escapee is captured a few blocks away.

Connecticut State Prison, Oct. 20- A white female is arrested trying to smuggle a gun to BLA prisoners.

1975: Rikers Island, NY, Feb. 17- BLA members subdued by guards after getting the keys (with a wooden knife as a weapon) from a guard; police receive a telephone call soon after the incident saying that five men armed with shotguns, one in wetsuit, are setting off in three rafts; one raft is found with a map, a set of oars, swim fins, and three .38 caliber bullets, and 9mm bullets. **Brooklyn, NY, May 25-** BLA member falls to his death in escape attempt; a second member is recaptured near the prison; two other BLA members return to their cells after the one fell.

1976: Trenton, NJ, Jan. 19- 11 hour rampage at Trenton State Prison; an inmate was killed in the opening exchange of gunfire. One inmate began the incident by shooting a guard in an escape attempt; another inmate who instigated the incident, was convicted of murdering a State Trooper in a shoot-out between BLA members and police on the New Jersey Turnpike; inmates threw a homemade grenade at police and guards as they rescue a wounded guard.

continued in next issue!
(see page 16 for BLA POWs addresses)

Why Aren't There More Anarchists of Color?

By Ali Khalid Abdullah



The Anarchist movement the world over is comprised of more whites than people of color. The vast majority of Anarchist writings are written by and published by whites. Further, the overall Anarchist movement, though it claims to be inclusive of all people, has shown itself to be less than what it claims.

The Anarchist movement must begin to examine and re-examine itself if we are going to build a movement that truly represents all people - if we are sincere about fighting against and ending all manner of racism, classism and kapitalism, which fuel racism.

The Anarchist movement must extend itself to working with the New Afrikan (Black) communities in Amerikkka, the Afrikan communities in Afrika and everywhere where there are people of color, be it in the UK, Central or South America, the Caribbean Islands, or other places. This must be a reality or the Anarchist movement can not and will not grow but will merely be a small reminder of what could have been.

In Amerikkka, Blacks, Latinos and First Nation (Native American) people are experiencing treatment worse than other groups of people; yet, the overall Anarchist movement isn't making its mark in these communities. Anarchists aren't developing ties with Black leaders, activists and politically charged groups, and the lack of action on the part of Anarchists shows a clear CONTRADICTION to the direct principles Anarchists believe in.

The Black, Latinos and First Nation communities aren't being invited to the Anarchist table, aren't given support by Anarchists as a whole. Why? Why are people claiming to be Anarchists or anti-authoritarian and yet are living segregated lives away from people who are daily abused by the very governmental and societal systems that we claim to hate? There is a problem here.

The Anarchist Action Collective in Eugene, Oregon, in the United States, sent me a flyer

entitled "Why Anarchy" and it had ten points explaining why there is a need for Anarchy. In this flyer the fact was reported that there is a "deepening crisis at every level," but there was no mention of the NEED for Anarchists to get readily involved in the struggle of people of color. It did not openly state how Anarchists must challenge the racist policies of Amerikkka's practice of racial profiling, which result in attacks on Black adults and youth by the police and judicial system. It did not state that Anarchists have a DUTY and RESPONSIBILITY to unite with people of color and live away from the secluded white areas where few Blacks and other people of color live. Anarchists must do this if we are going to struggle day by day with our people in need. Knowing the problems yet not doing anything collectively or individually in terms of ACTION is the same as not giving a damn.

Why should Black people, Latino people, First Nation people or Asian people work with, support and fight with anarchists when they aren't being consulted, acknowledged (with real intent), aided or supported in their plights and valued for the knowledge they have?

As an Anarchist and as a New Afrikan, I find it downright embarrassing for the Anarchist movement not to be more completely involved with the conditions of my people and working hand in hand with my people.

I find it sickening to read how Anarchists believe this and believe that but yet haven't any substantial numbers of Black, Latino, First Nation or Asian people within their collectives. Why hasn't the Anarchist movement taken on a more progressive and active role to reach these people, people of color? And why do we only read and parrot what Anarchists of old have said and done when we have brilliant, articulate and committed Anarchists today who can be looked upon or read about and apply their ideas and methods?

If we don't break free from a basically white-concentrated group to a movement of all colors and representing all interests, then we will not be an effective movement and will choke on our past glorifications at the exclu-

sion of others who could contribute, benefit and gain from the Anarchist movement here in Amerikkka and around the world.

There has to be a "re-thinking" in our approach, in our overall views. Where there is the most oppression is where anarchists should be. Where there is the most repression is where the Anarchists should set up bases and propagate - win minds to our cause, aims and objectives. We do not need to be posted up in hide-away holes in isolation from the most disenfranchised or the dispossessed. What has made Anarchism not appeal to many people of color is the very lack of action I am speaking of. Sure, there are some people of color who are Anarchist and believe in its principles, but we are relatively few. This must change!

It is often said and suggested that "Anarchists are increasingly more militant." However, when I look and see the racist police gunning down Black people - New Afrikan people - I have to ask "Where are the Anarchists in mass protest?" Yet, I always read or see on the news some mask-faced white person claiming to be an Anarchist throwing a damn brick or bottle through a McDonalds Restaurant. I can always read about a mass group of people claiming to be anti-authoritarian and taking Direct Action to save some trees, wild life or some environmentally blighted area (which is important), but why aren't they this passionately active when it comes to the complete inhumane treatment of fellow human beings who just happen to be people of color? There is something majorly wrong with this picture. It is slanted. It is skewed and if I can see it, surely millions of other Black and Latino and First Nation people can see it.

ANARCHISTS AND THE PRISON ISSUE

Many, many people are incarcerated, especially here in Amerikkka. There are close to or over two million people in prison, jails or juvenile facilities. Disproportionately, the vast MAJORITY of these people are people of color, mainly Black and Latino. There are many professed Anarchist/anti-authoritarians who aren't reaching inside these prisons to either work with us known anarchists or to establish ties with

politically active/conscious prisoners so they can be utilized in the struggle. This is sad. A sad statement, yet one which is true and must be discussed openly if we are to change our present day thinking. There are Anarchist prisoners scattered all over the world who aren't getting the real support they need. This says much about where we are headed as Anarchist anti-authoritarians.

In Spain, there are many Anarchists languishing in prisons under totally inhumane conditions. These brave and dedicated prisoners are staging hunger strikes and open rebellious protests hoping to draw the attention of Anarchists globally. Are you listening?

In Germany, anarchist comrade Thomas Meyer Falk, lives in total isolation in a cold, damp prison cell. He needs help. Is the Global Anarchist Community listening?

In Italy, Anarchists are repressed and arrested for all manner of trumped up charges... Is the Global Anarchist Community listening?

In Mexico, Anarchist students are protesting the government's attempt to privatize education - are you listening? In Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria, and, and, and - Anarchists are subject to brutality, murder, beatings, incarcerations... Are you listening to those of us who languish in prisons and jails still believing in the spirit of Anarchy yet getting little to no support? It is vital that the Anarchist Collective World Wide begins to make the words ANARCHY and ANTI-AUTHORITY mean what they say by ACTION! But again I say, this movement cannot and will not be totally effective until the overall Anarchist Collective includes, endorses and has more people of color deeply involved. Anarchists must reach out to the people needing the most help and work diligently with them.

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Our Bodies Are Political!: MENSTRUATION

By Chelsea Lincoln

I remember when I first started to menstruate. I didn't really know much about it at all and my mom didn't really talk to me about it. I was given two choices of "protection": tampons or pads, both of which were produced by a big corporation. Through the years, I didn't learn too much more. I just knew when I started to bleed, I used one of those products. I never thought about where they came from, how they were made and what effects they could have on my body.

They were just one of those things that I tried not to think about, for my menstruating was secret, from the public and myself. I didn't want to deal with it.

I was taught that menstruation was gross and inconvenient. I never heard anything positive about it and I knew to never talk about it. This was definitely reassured by commercials seen on TV, they were all about being secret and clean and white and sterile - never to touch blood.

I soon discovered how much control corporations have over our bodies - especially womyn's bodies. They are a factor behind how we perceive our bodies and how we care for them. Every year corporations sell billions of products meant to "protect" womyn from their blood and in turn poison them with chemicals, pollute our waters and contribute to the "hush, hush" syndrome surrounding menstruation. These corporations have consumerized womyn's bodies and their functions to be turned into profit. Womyn in North America buy more than 80% of goods and services. That is a lot of power in the hands of those who are conveniently taught to be quiet and submissive.

The corporate product of tampons and pads are very unnecessarily white. This represents the facade of clean and sterile. Most corporate menstrual products are bleached with a chlorine compound. The dioxins left in the products have considerable health impacts. It is reported that

one in three North Americans will acquire some kind of cancer in their lifetime in which 80 to 90% of these cancers are caused by human-made toxins, many of them chlorine based.

Tampons are very evil; they absorb 90% of a womyn bodies' natural secretions other than menstrual blood. Since the product is inserted into the body, womyn are more susceptible to the toxins found in the tampon. Most corporate tampons contain rayon, a pulp product that can only be made through a chlorine compound bleaching process. Rayon fibers are often left in the womyn's vagina and can be traced as the probable cause of TSS, can cause ulceration and peeling of the mucous membrane. If you look at websites by Tampax and other corporate tampon companies, you will see they denounce these claims, trying to say that rayon is just as good for your body as cotton and that there are no harmful dioxins in tampons. I guess they just use good dioxins? Tampax corporation even had a connection to a FDA website to address concerns by womyn about tampon safety. Of course this governmental agency that supports and promotes the killing of innocent animals for scientific fraud supports the corporate product. Isn't that what

they truly get paid to do?

Although pads are not internal products, the effects of toxins are still apparent. Many womyn report rashes caused by pads and don't realize this isn't natural. There are many alternatives available from the corporate "protection." There are tampons available that are 100% cotton and do not use chlorine bleach. There are also disposable pads made of cotton as well. These products are better for the body,

but they are still taxing of the environment. All disposable tampons and pads are over-packaged and cause an enormous amount of waste. Pads are especially wasteful in packaging and product. The average womyn goes through 10,000 pads or tampons in her lifetime. Plastic applicators wash up on beaches and fill up landfills.

It was a few years ago when I discovered that pads can be made of cloth and washed for re-use. Since I sew, I made a few and was really happy. More and more I talked with womyn about what they used.

One of my friends was very excited to tell me about the Keeper, a re-useable menstrual cup. It is worn internally and collects blood, which can be emptied occasionally and then washed and re-inserted. One Keeper can last up to 10 years. Four out of five womyn in my household use alternative products. The cut back on waste from this can definitely be noticed!

I wasn't sure what one of my roommates

used, so I asked her and she told me about the sponge. I never heard of the sponge before so she told me about it. It is completely natural and worn internally where it absorbs blood, similar to a tampon. When full, it can simply be rinsed out and re-inserted. No waste at all.

Using alternative menstrual products is very empowering. When I first started to use cloth pads, rinsing them out was the first I really touched my own blood. It forced me to do something I was taught to be ashamed of doing. It taught me to understand and know my body more, again something womyn are discouraged from doing. Being proud rather than shameful or embarrassed about menstruating is one way womyn's empowerment is achieved. This means males also have to be more accepting and not perpetuate the idea that menstruating is gross.

Corporations will continue to mislead womyn to buy their products, but we all can do something about it. As commercials are targeting a more diverse crowd of womyn, we need to make sure these same womyn know about what these corporate products can do to their bodies and offer alternatives. Tell your friends and family about alternatives. Educate yourself more on this issue, this is just the beginning. Contact corporations such as Tampax and tell them what you think. Demand chlorine-free products at your local store. There are a lot of things that can be done to create a safer menstruating world for womyn, the environment and our society. For more information-and there is much, much more out there-please checkout Bloodsisters at their website: www.bloodsisters.org, or write them at 176 Bernard West, Montreal, Quebec, H2T 2K2, Canada, or e-mail them at: bloodsisters@chickmail.org

Chelsea Lincoln, 636 SW 16th St., Corvallis, OR 97333

Democracy Is Direct! By Cindy Milstein

These days, words seem to be thrown around like so much loose change. *Democracy* is no exception.

We hear demands to "democratize" the World Bank, IMF, and WTO. Some contend that "democracy" is the standard for good government. Others allege that "more," "better," or even "participatory democracy" is the needed antidote to our woes. At the heart of these well-intentioned but misguided sentiments beats a genuine desire: to gain control over our lives.

This is certainly understandable given the world in which we live. Anonymous, often distant events and institutions—nearly impossible to describe, much less confront—determine whether we work, drink clean water, or have a roof over our heads. Most people feel that life isn't what it should be; many go so far as to complain about "the government" or "corporations." But beyond that, the sources of social misery are so masked they may even look friendly: the Ben & Jerry's ice cream cone of "caring" capitalism or the "humanitarian" gestures of Western superpowers.

Since the real causes appear untouchable and incomprehensible, people tend to displace blame onto imaginary targets with a face: individuals rather than institutions, people rather than power. The list of scapegoats is long: from blacks and Jews, to single mothers and gays, and so on. It's much easier to lash out at those who, like us, have little or no power. Hatred of the visible "other" replaces social struggle against seemingly invisible systems of oppression. A longing for community—a place where we can take hold of our own lives, share it with others, and build something of our own choosing—is being distorted around the globe into nationalisms, fundamentalisms, separatisms, and the resultant hate crimes, genocides, and ethnic cleansings. Community no longer implies a rich recognition of the self and society; it translates into a battle unto death between one tiny "us" against another small "them," as the wheels of domination roll over us all. The powerless trample the powerless, while the powerful go largely unscathed.

We are left with a few bad choices framed by the powers that be. In a *Nation* article, Slavoj Žižek termed this the "double blackmail" in relation to last year's Kosovo conflict: if you opposed air strikes, you lent tacit support to Milosevic's authoritarian regime of ethnic cleansing; if you condemned Milosevic, you stood behind a world of global capital. This choiceless choice applies to other contemporary crises as well. Genocides seem to necessitate nation-state interventions; the excesses of free trade seem to call for international regulatory bodies. If the right answer, from an ethical point of view, lies outside this picture altogether, what of it? It's all talk when people are dying or the environment is being destroyed. At least that's what common wisdom purports, from government officials to news commentators to the average person on the street.

Even much of the Left can see no other "realistic" choices to control an out-of-control world than those that are presented from on high. Given this, the leftist horizon narrows to what's allegedly achievable: NGO or Two-Thirds World participation in international decision-making bodies; accountability and openness in nation-states; the rectification of the wrongs of capitalism. These and other such demands are bare minimums within the current system. Yet they are a far cry from any sort of liberatory response. They work with a circumscribed and neutralized notion of democracy, where "democracy" is neither of the people, by the people, nor for the people, but rather, only in the supposed name of the people. What gets dubbed "democracy" is mere representation, and the best that progressives and leftists can advocate for within the confines of this prepackaged definition are *improved* versions of a fundamentally flawed system.

"The moment a people gives itself representatives, it is no longer free," proclaimed Jean-Jacques Rousseau in *On the Social Contract*. Freedom, particularly social freedom, is utterly antithetical to a state, even a representative one. At the most basic level, representation *assumes* that we give our freedom away to another; it assumes, in essence, that some should have power

and many others shouldn't. Without power equally distributed to all, we renounce our very capacity to join with everyone else in meaningfully shaping our society. We renounce our ability to self-determine, and thus our liberty. So, no matter how enlightened leaders may be, they are governing as tyrants nonetheless, since *we—the people—* are servile to their decisions.

This is not to say that representative government is comparable with more authoritarian forms of rule. A representative system that fails in its promise of, say, universal human rights is clearly preferable to a government that makes no such pretensions at all. Yet even the kindest of representative systems necessarily entails a loss of liberty. Like capitalism, a grow-or-die imperative is built into the state's very structure. As Karl Marx explained in *Capital*, capitalism's aim is—in fact, has to be—"the unceasing movement of profit-making." So, too, is there such an aim underlying the state: the unceasing movement of power making. The drive for profit and power, respectively, must become ends in themselves. For without these drives, we have neither capitalism nor the state; these "goals" are part of their body constitution. Hence, the two often interlinked systems of exploitation and domination must do whatever is necessary to sustain themselves, otherwise they are unable to fulfill their unceasing momentum.

Whatever a state does, then, has to be in its own interests. Sometimes, of course, the state's interests coincide with the interests of various groups or people; they may even overlap with concepts such as justice or compassion. But these convergences are in no way central or even essential to its smooth functioning. They are merely instrumental stepping-stones as the state continually moves to maintain, solidify, and consolidate its power. Because, like it or not, all states are forced to strive for a monopoly on power. "The same competition," wrote Mikhail Bakunin in *Statism and Anarchism*, "which in the economic field annihilates and swallows up small and even medium-sized capital . . . in favor of vast capital . . . is also operative in the lives of the States, leading to the destruction and absorption of small and medium-sized States for the benefit of empires." States must, as Bakunin noted, "devour others in order not to be devoured." Such a power-taking game will almost invariably tend toward centralization, hegemony, and increasingly sophisticated methods of command, coercion, and control. Plainly, in this quest to monopolize power, there will always have to be dominated subjects.

As institutionalized systems of domination, then, neither state nor capital are controllable. Nor can they be mended or made benign. Thus, the rallying cry of any kind of leftist or progressive activism that accepts the terms of the nation-state and/or capitalism is ultimately only this: "No exploitation without representation! No domination without representation!"

Direct democracy is completely at odds with both the state and capitalism. For as "rule of the people" (the etymological root of *democracy*), democracy's underlying logic is essentially the unceasing movement of freedom making. And freedom, as we have seen, must be jettisoned in even the best of representative systems.

Not coincidentally, direct democracy's opponents have generally been those in power. Whenever *the people* spoke—as in those who were disenfranchised, disempowered, or even starved—it usually took a revolution to work through a "dialogue" about democracy's value. As a direct form of governance, democracy can be nothing but a threat to those small groups who wish to rule others: whether monarchs, aristocrats, dictators, or even federal administrations as in the US.

We forget that democracy finds its radical edge in the great revolutions of the past, the American Revolution included. As libertarian leftists living in the United States, it's particularly appropriate to harken to those strains of a radicalized democracy that fought so valiantly and lost so crushingly in the American Revolution. We must take up that unfinished project if we have any hope of contesting domination.

This does not mean that the many injustices tied to the founding of the US should be ignored or whitewashed. The fact that native peoples, blacks, women, and others were *and still are* excluded, brutalized, and oppressed wasn't

just a sideshow to the historic event that created this country. Any movement for direct democracy has to grapple with the relation between the oppression and the liberatory moments of the American Revolution.

At the same time, one needs to view the revolution in the context of its times and ask, In what ways was it an advance? Did it offer glimpses of new freedoms that we should ultimately extend to everyone? Like all the great modern revolutions, the American Revolution spawned politics based on face-to-face assemblies confederated within and between cities.

"American democratic polity was developed out of genuine community life. . . . The township was the political unit, the town meeting the political medium, and roads, schools, the peace of the community, were the political objectives," according to John Dewey in *The Public and Its Problems*. This outline of self-governance did not suddenly appear in 1776. It arrived with the first settlers, who, freed from the bonds of Old World authority, decided to constitute the rules of their society a new in the Mayflower Compact. This and a host of other subsequent compacts were considered mutual promises of both rights and duties on the part of each person to their community, a promise initially emanating out of new found egalitarian religious values. The idea caught on, and many New England villages drafted their own charters and institutionalized direct democracy through town meetings, where citizens met regularly to determine their community's public policy and needs.

Participating in the debates, deliberations, and decisions of one's community became part of a full and vibrant life; it not only gave colonists (albeit, mostly men) the experience and institutions that would later support their revolution but also a tangible form of freedom worth fighting for. They struggled to preserve control over their daily lives: first with the British over independence, and later, among themselves over competing forms of governance. "The final constitution set up a federal republic, not a direct democracy. But before, during, and after the revolution, town meetings, confederated assemblies, and citizens' militias either exerted their established powers of self-management or created new ones when they were blocked-in, both legal and extra legal institutions—becoming ever more radical in the process.

We have inherited this self-schooling in direct democracy, even if only in vague echoes like New Hampshire's "live free or die" motto or Vermont's yearly Town Meeting Day. Such institutional and cultural fragments, however, bespeak deep-seated values that many in the US still hold dear: independence, initiative, liberty, equality. They continue to create a very real tension between grassroots self-governance and top-down representation—a tension that we modern-day revolutionaries, need to build on.

Such values resonate through the history of the American Left: from nineteenth-century experiments in utopian communities, to the civil rights movement's struggle for social freedom, to the Students for a Democratic Society's demands for a participatory democracy in the 1960s, to the anarchist-inspired affinity group organizing of the 1970s' antinuke movement and last year's Seattle action. In both its principles and practices, the US Left has been inventive and dynamic, particularly in the postwar era. We've challenged multiple "isms," calling into question old privileges and dangerous exclusions. We've created a culture within our own organizations that nearly mandates, even if it doesn't always work, an internally democratic process. We're pretty good at organizing everything from demonstrations to counterinstitutions.

This is not to romanticize the past or present work of the Left; rather, it is to point out that we, too, haven't lacked a striving for the values underpinning this country's birth. Then and now, however, one of our biggest mistakes has been to ignore politics *per se*—that is, the need for a guaranteed place for freedom to emerge.

The Clash sang years ago of "rebels dancing on air," and we have modeled our political struggles on this. We may feel free or powerful in the streets, at infoshops, within collective meetings, but this is a momentary and often private sensation. It allows us to be political as in reacting to, opposing, countering, or even try-

ing to work outside public policy. But it doesn't let us do politics, as in making public policy itself. It is only "freedom from" the things we don't like, or more accurately, liberation.

"Liberation and freedom are not the same," contended Hannah Arendt in *On Revolution*. Certainly, liberation is a basic necessity: people need to be free from harm, hunger and hatred. But liberation falls far short of freedom. If we are ever to fulfill both our needs and desires, to take control of our lives, each and every one of us needs the "freedom to" self-develop-individually, socially, and politically. As Arendt added: "[Liberation] is incapable of even grasping, let alone realizing, the central idea of revolution, which is the foundation of freedom."

The question then becomes: Where do decisions that affect society as a whole get made? For this is where power resides. It is time we opened the doors of that house to everyone. For only when we all have equal and ongoing access to participate in the space where public policy is made—the political sphere—will freedom have a fighting chance to gain a footing.

Montesquieu, one of the most influential theorists for the American revolutionists, tried to wrestle with "the constitution of political freedom" in *The Spirit of the Laws*. He came to the conclusion that "power must check power." In the postrevolutionary US, this idea eventually made its way into the Constitution as a system of checks and balances. Yet Montesquieu's notion was much more expansive, touching on the very essence of power itself. The problem is not power *per se* but power without limits. Or to press Montesquieu's concept, the problem is power as an end in itself. Power needs to be forever linked to freedom; freedom needs to be the limit placed on power. Tom Paine brought this home to the American Revolution in *The Rights of Man*: "Government on the old system is an assumption of power for the aggrandizement of itself; on the new, a delegation of power for the common benefit of society."

If freedom is the social aim, power must be held horizontally. All must be rulers and ruled simultaneously, or a system of rulers and subjects is the only alternative. We must all hold power equally if freedom is to coexist with power. Freedom can only be maintained through a sharing of political power, and this sharing happens through political institutions. Rather than being made a monopoly, power should be distributed to us all, thereby allowing all our varied "powers" (of reason, persuasion, decision making, and so on) to blossom. This is the power to create rather than dominate.

Of course, institutionalizing direct democracy assures only the barest bones of a free society. Freedom is never a done deal, nor a fixed notion. New forms of domination will probably always reappear. Minimally, directly democratic institutions open a public space where everyone, if they so choose, can come together in a deliberative and decision-making body: where everyone has the opportunity to persuade and be persuaded; a space where no discussion or decision is hidden, and where it can always be returned to for scrutiny, accountability, or rethinking. Embryonic within direct democracy, if only as a truly open policymaking mechanism, are values like equality, diversity, cooperation, and respect for human worth—hopefully, the building blocks of a liberatory ethics as we begin to self-manage our communities, the economy, and society in an ever widening circle of confederated citizen assemblies.

As a practice, direct democracy must be learned. As a principle, it will have to undergird all decision making. As an institution, it must be fought for. It will not appear overnight; it will emerge little by little out of struggles to, as Murray Bookchin phrased it, "democratize the republic, radicalize our democracy."

We must infuse all our political activities with politics. It's time to call for a second American Revolution, but this time, one that breaks the bonds of nation-states, one that knows no borders or masters, and one that draws the potentiality of libertarian self-governance to its limits, fully enfranchising all with the power to act democratically. This begins with reclaiming the word *democracy*—not as a better version of representation, but as a radical process to directly reshape our world.

News Briefs

PHILADELPHIA, PA-- The International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal headquarters in Philadelphia experienced a COINTELPRO-style burglary on June 8, when files of financial records and lists of high-profile contacts vital to the ICFMAJ were stolen. Other items in the office (i.e. valuable office equipment) were untouched. The burglars used a governmental lock pick or obtained a key to the office. The ICFMAJ regards the incident as politically motivated: a thievery of information, not items of monetary value. "This was a government plan to disrupt our work," says ICFMAJ Coordinator Pam Africa, who said the incident closely resembled the FBI and police COINTELPRO break-ins of leftist organizations epidemic in the 1960's and 70's. With the Federal District Court's current attempts to restrict the work of Mitchell Cohen, C. Clark Kissinger and other activists arrested at the Liberty Bell protests for Mumia last summer, the recent office break-in is doubly suspicious. This is a time when organizers nation-wide are preparing for Mumia's upcoming federal court hearing and the Republican National Convention. The burglary is the latest in a small string of suspicious thieveries and destruction of information belonging to ICFMAJ and MOVE. An ICFMAJ car was broken into in 1999, leaving the radio intact but documents missing. In 1995, a blaze moved from an abandoned house next door to the upstairs floor of a MOVE house, but a hose was left running into the basement, far from where any fire ever caught. Pam Africa and another man found firefighters standing around while a hose ran full-blast into their basement, thoroughly soaking large numbers of MOVE and ICFMAJ files.

The ICFMAJ is cautioning other groups working on Mumia's case to be wary in the event that other offices are targeted for similar burglaries. **International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal PO Box 19709 Philadelphia, PA19143 Phone: 215-476-8812 Fax: 215-476-6180 ICFMAJ@aol.com**

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA-- Garment factory security guards opened fire on a 1,000 strong group of striking workers, grazing a young woman in the head.

Workers swarmed the streets on the outskirts of the capital for a second straight day in a strike to increase the minimum wage from \$40 to \$70 a month and reduce the 48-hour work week.

Union-organized protesters marched from factory to factory, forcing open locked gates and urging workers inside to join the strike. Nearly 20 of the impoverished country's 178 garment factories are believed to have been closed by the walkouts.

When the protesters reached the gates of the Mithona factory, armed guards beat back the crowd with sticks. The demonstrators responded by throwing rocks and storming the gate, and the guards opened fire.

Violence continued for about an hour until opposition leader Sam Rainsy arrived and urged factories to meet worker demands. The protesters dispersed soon afterwards but the strike is expected to continue.

WASHINGTON, DC -- On Thursday, May 18, the US Congress dismissed the Moakley Amendment, accepted the Pentagon proposal to close the School Of the Americas (SOA) and open an SOA clone (The Defense Institute for Hemispheric Security Cooperation) the very next day. The House opted to change the SOA's name rather than close its doors. The name is basically all that is changed.

The Pentagon's deceptive proposal isn't a move towards responsible policy for Latin America, but an attempt to silence those working for human rights and justice, an attempt to silence the bloody truth about the School of Assassins, but the truth can not be silenced!

Support in the House was strong and the amendment lost by only ten votes! All week long people fighting to close the SOA lobbied on Capitol Hill, but human rights activists weren't the only ones lobbying; secretary of the Army Caldera, Col. Weidner and Colin Powell were lobbying to keep the SOA open at any cost. This shows we are the threat of a good example, we are winning and now is the time to rise up!

SOA Watch ~ PO Box 4566 ~ Washington, DC 20017 ~ 202-234-3440 ~ www.sow.org

SHAKA'S LAST WORDS...

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that tradition, and that period of resistance. We will prevail. We may lose this battle, but we will win the war. This death, this lynching will be avenged. It will be avenged, it must be avenged. The people must avenge this murder. So my brothers, all of y'all stay strong, continue to move forward.

Know that I love all of you. I love the people, I love all of you for your blessing, strength, for your courage, for your dignity, the way you have come here tonight, and the way you have protested and kept this nation together. Keep moving forward, my brothers. Slavery couldn't stop us. The lynching couldn't stop us in the south. This lynching will not stop us tonight. We will go forward. Our destiny in this country is freedom and liberation. We will gain our freedom and liberation by any means necessary. By any means necessary, we keep marching forward.

I love you, Mr. Jackson. Bianca, make sure that the state does not get my body. Make sure that we get my name as Shaka Sankofa. My name is not Gary Graham. Make sure that it is properly presented on my grave. Shaka Sankofa.

I died fighting for what I believe in. I died fighting for what was just and what was right. I did not kill Bobby Lambert, and the truth is going to come out. It will be brought out.

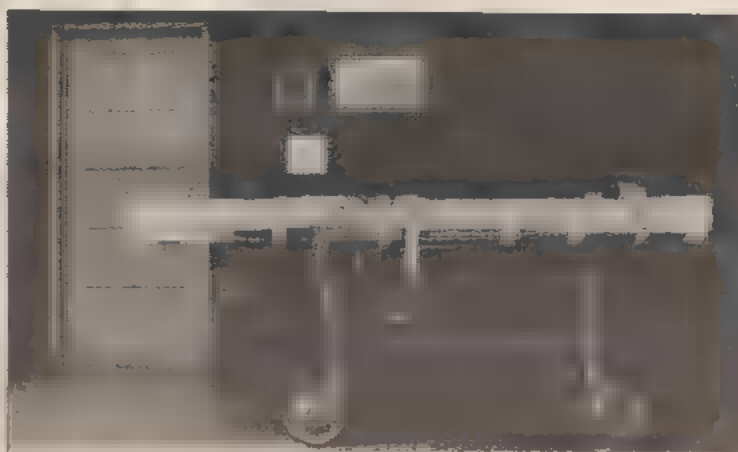
I want you to take this thing off into international court. Mr. Robert Mohammed and all y'all. I want you, I want to get my family and take this down in international court and file a law suit. Get all the video tapes of all the beatings. They have beat me up in the back. They have beat me up at the unit over there. Get all the video tapes supporting that law suit. And make the public exposed to the genocide and this brutal world, and let the world see what is really happening here behind closed doors. Let the world see the barbarity and injustice of what is really happening here.

You must get those video tapes. You must make it exposed, this injustice, to the world. You

must continue to demand a moratorium on all executions. We must move forward Minister Robert Mohammed.

Ashanti Chimurenga. I love you for standing with me, my sister. You are a strong warrior queen. You will continue to be strong in everything that you do. Believe in yourself, you must hold your head up, in the spirit of Winnie Mandela, in the spirit of Nelson Mandela. Y'all must move forward. We will stop this lynching.

Reverend Al Sharpton. I love you, my brother. Bianca Jagger. I love all of you. Y'all make sure that we continue to stand together. Reverend Jesse Jackson and know that this murder, this lynching will not be forgotten. I love you, too, my brother.



Shaka was handcuffed to the gurney and executed by lethal injection.

This is genocide in America. This is what happens to black men when they stand up and protest for what is right and just. We refuse to compromise, we refuse to surrender the dignity for what we know is right. But we will move on, we have been strong in the past. We will continue to be strong as a people. You can kill a revolutionary, but you cannot stop the revolution. The revolution will go on. The people will carry the revolution on. You are the people that must carry that revolutionary on, in order to liberate our children from this genocide and for what is happening here in America tonight. What has happened for the last

100 or so years in America. This is the part of the genocide, this is part of the African (unintelligible), that we as black people have endured in America. But we shall overcome, we will continue with this. We will continue, we will gain our freedom and liberation, by any means necessary.

Stay strong. They cannot kill us. We will move forward. To my sons, to my daughters, all of you. I love all of you. You have been wonderful. Keep your heads up. Keep moving forward. Keep united. Maintain the love and unity in the community. And know that victory is assured. Victory for the people will be assured.

We will gain our freedom and liberation in this country. We will gain it and we will do it by any means necessary. We will keep marching. March on black people. Keep your heads high. March on. All y'all leaders. March on. Take your message to the people. Preach the

moratorium for all executions. We're gonna stop, we are going to end the death penalty in this country. We are going to end it all across this world. Push forward people. And know that what y'all are doing is just. What y'all are doing is just.

This is nothing more than pure and simple murder. This is what is happening tonight in America. Nothing more than state sanctioned murders, state sanctioned lynching, right here in America, and right here tonight. This is what is happening to my brothers. Nothing less. They know I'm innocent. They've got the facts to prove it. They know I'm innocent. But they cannot acknowledge my

innocence, because to do so would be to publicly admit their guilt. This is something these racist people will never do. We must remember brothers, this is what we're faced with. You must take this endeavor forward. You must stay strong. You must continue to hold your heads up, and to be there.

And I love you, too, my brother. All of you who are standing with me in solidarity. We will prevail. We will keep marching. Keep marching black people, black power. Keep marching black people, black power. Keep marching black people. Keep marching black people. They are killing me tonight. They are murdering me tonight.

Tent City...

continued from page 6

early Saturday morning meal program came to serve in the park. One guy in particular who had slept in the park on Friday night began tormenting those standing in line to receive food that morning. "Where the hell were all of you last night? We're all out here for you. You will come and eat the food, and complain about how miserable you are, but when it comes to laying your butts on the line you just sit there. If I don't see each and every one of you all out here tonight, the word is gonna be out on you phonics." I sat back with a slight grin on my face. Within hours our numbers had doubled.

Saturday was full of productivity amidst play. A medical caravan set up shop in the middle of the park to give free health check-ups to all. Freshmen enrollees and curious on-lookers passed through and were educated on the issues. New friendships were secured, old ones rejuvenated and camaraderie was being extended amongst all. At large volunteers helped in the meal preparation; men, women and children of all ages played games and carried on as if on a family vacation and that evening's park assembly was an introductory course in Anarchist organizing 101.

Amongst the forty to fifty folks that participated, most were new to consensus decision making and non-hierarchical structures of accomplishing goals. So, for close to two hours we debated, shared, planned and mapped out a very cohesive battle plan and set of demands for the university and all were heard, their views respected and their hearts filled with boundless enthusiasm. If there ever were any illusions of anyone being in charge, they were put to rest for good after the success of the park assembly.

As the day melted away and nightfall was upon us again, we were tested on several occasions, small and great. As there were now between 150-200 people taking part in the action and preparing to camp out, a few drunks came to be in our presence and created a world of trouble. First, someone had broken into a backyard in a neighboring community and sto-

len a tent and brought it to use at the park. Then a number of the aforementioned drunks became rowdy and attempted to fight one another. Another guy was threatened to be killed in a very serious manner the moment he left the park. It looked as if all was about to crumble or even worse that we might have to rely on the pigs to come in and settle disputes when something miraculous occurred.

All of the commotion had disturbed the large majority of those in the park to resolve the problems effectively and quickly. People darted to the various hotspots out of their own free will and explained to those carrying on what we were trying to create, how they were jeopardizing all with their behavior and asked them to please be considerate and to disperse if they couldn't calm down as they would surely have the police on hand. Almost simultaneously those who were being destructive left the park for good. Collectively we had diffused a dangerous situation and protected all we had worked to create. We were stronger then ever before.

Sunday brought the final full day of the takeover and newer faces still. The day was full of dialogue, games, continued outreach and another park assembly. We made our plans for the following day's march to President Trani's office and how we would deliver our set of demands. We also talked about tent city being merely a launching pad for a long term, highly concentrated effort at attacking the university for their harmful gentrification of the Carver community, their alliance with the city in criminalizing the homeless and their general lack of inclusion of their neighbors in their wholly undemocratic decision making process.

All in all, Sunday was primarily a day of leisure. A day of reflection at what we had accomplished. The park was safer than weekend then it had been in years. All resources were shared communally, all tasks evenly distributed and carried out by all on hand. We had practiced conflict resolution in a highly charged atmosphere. We stood in direct opposition to a

powerful and threatening entity, challenged the city's fascist park curfew laws and created a sense of unity and direction that would fuel our fires for years to come.

On Monday morning we cleaned the park, collected all of our gear and rallied through campus on opening day being boisterous and defiant all the way to the door of the president's office. The media followed the whole way rolling live footage. We delivered our demands and insisted upon a meeting that morning. After being shuffled around to the VCU police department a couple of blocks away, three representatives were invited inside to have dialogue with the director of community affairs for a very brief, VCU dominated meeting. Then suddenly for the first time in days we had no-

where to go. Not wanting the momentum to die I invited a few folks over for a celebratory feast. When everyone was gone, I was alone for the first time since Thursday.

I sat back and cried as I reminisced about the powerful world that we had just created for ourselves. I didn't want to go

back to my day job, paying rent, living in a house with folks who I wasn't sure if I even respected. That first taste of liberation nearly made me choke. From that day forward I knew and realized that Anarchism was as valid today as it was in Chicago in 1886, or Barcelona in 1936, or Paris in 1968. That it is not a dying, stale old doctrine of the 18th century, that it is the lifeblood of those who stand up to reclaim their lives everyday, all over the world. It is a struggle, a movement that grows stronger with each passing day until we reach a critical mass of resistance and take back that which is rightfully ours to begin with: our world.

For the current issue of my zine, *Complete Control*, containing an assortment of articles, stories, press clippings and photos from the Tent City please send \$1 to: *Complete Control* - PO Box 5021 Richmond, VA 23220

Counter Institutions

By Howard J. Ehrlich

Most theorists of revolution pay little attention to Anarchist theory, and for good reason. Few Anarchists over the last century attempted to develop one. Much of what gets labeled as revolutionary writing by Anarchists is in actuality rehashed Marxist theory, usually and paradoxically adopting a form of worker vanguardism. A "vanguard," of course, has no place in Anarchist theory. Revolution is a process that takes us *from here to there* and keeps on moving. The shift from capitalism to Anarchism is a fantasy in that we can only imagine what a post-capitalist society would be like. And we need to understand that whatever we do imagine will likely be inadequate and subject to further change. The problem for us is to try to create that image of the future in the present, understanding that this is a revolutionary act and pivotal to the process. "Anarchy is not a thing of the future, but of the present" wrote Gustav Landauer. "It is not a matter of demands, but of living."

One problem of a developing anarchist theory is the undercurrent of anti-intellectualism that runs through contemporary American anarchism. (Given the psychological reductionism and anti-intellectualism of the society as whole, this is not surprising. Sadly, the anti-intellectualism of anarchists reflects how poorly they have freed themselves from the dominant norms and values.) There is no doubt that the anarchist movement is an activist movement. But practice without a grounding in theory leads to a mindless activism.

There are numerous theories of revolution, but at this stage in American Anarchism and the incredible power and adaptability of this political economy, it would be inappropriate to embrace a single theory and dogmatic to act as if we possessed the exclusive map of the revolutionary pathway. Nevertheless, we need to be exploring different paths to see if we can get to where we think we are going. The path I choose to walk is one that leads to the development of counter-institutions. Although many people have walked this way before, especially through the mid '60s and '70s, government repression, the collapse of the "new left," which was considerably anarchist in orientation, and the lack of political zeal and political socialization of the recruits of the late '70s, led to abandoning this path.

What is a counter-institution?

A counter-institution requires five components. First, it is a "formal" organization. As an organization, it has a clear membership, rules for recruiting and maintaining membership, and a program of activity. Nothing has to be written down, but it has to be practiced. Many Anarchists, in contrast, seem to regard an organization as any group of people who come together for a specific action or goal. It may be fine for a demonstration or for a short-term objective, but not for a counter-institution.

Secondly, an organization is Anarchist if it maintains genuine Anarchist practice. This means, to begin with, that it has no hierarchy. This does not mean everybody does everything, or that there is no specialization or division of labor. It means the specialist or the highly competent don't hold more privilege or invested with more power because of her/his special knowledge or skills. One way these positions of potential power are neutralized is by rotating members across all tasks. The nitty-gritty tasks and the dirty work, the satisfying and the celebratory, are all shared at various times. The power inherent in certain positions in a division of labor is neutralized considerably when the appropriate skills are taught to everyone.

More positively, rotating people across tasks brings the membership to a greater comprehension of the organization than any other process.

There are instances when actual rotation can't be achieved, although these are fewer than most people think. We may not want the neurosurgeon and the operating room nurse to take turns, but there are many other mechanisms that will not only equalize their relationship but enhance it. Education is one of those mechanisms.

Internal education is the third principle of organization. Most counter-institutions fall

apart here. Educational activities, especially those within the organization, often appear to the overworked as a distraction from the main task. Members must be trained in the specifics of the jobs they are involved in, and in the theory and practice of Anarchist organization. The counter-institution was started to provide a service to the membership and the community. But it also started to build an Anarchist organization; one engaged in developing an Anarchist practice. In addition, it was started to be against the straight institutions it is counter to. A successful counter-institution is likely to attract people uninterested in Anarchist practice or theory, and often uninterested in being an oppositional group. A food co-op that just sells good inexpensive food to its members is a nice addition to a community. But if all it does is sell food, it is just another small business, though it feels good. It needs to educate its membership while maintaining a collective organization. It needs to educate its community about capitalist food production, processing, and distribution systems. And, under the best of circumstances, it needs to have a program that goes further.

The fourth component is decision-making and conflict management. Having observed neighborhood meetings, student groups, and Anarchist collectives over many years, I'm still amazed at the socialized level of incompetence people show in trying to conduct their affairs. Few of us receive training on consensus decision-making or coping with conflict. There are many manuals on consensus, group process, and conflict management. They need to be mastered.

The fifth component is that of "modeling." It is the next step in which we begin the process of helping others build their counter-institutions. Moving beyond your own boundaries is a movement building necessity.

Some Questions

★ How do we know this will work?

We know because it has worked! Further, if we can't organize at the level of a community, how can we expect to organize beyond that?

★ Won't the state try to shut down a successful counter-institution?

Of course. What government is going to allow a revolutionary political opposition to develop? We must be prepared for repression.

★ Isn't this just another middle-class "feel good" safe tactic?

First, if you organize a middle-class organization, then you have a middle-class organization. If you organize a group of white men, then you have a group of white men. What you get out of organizing is what you put into it.

Second, if we're serious about radical change, we must also work to change ourselves.

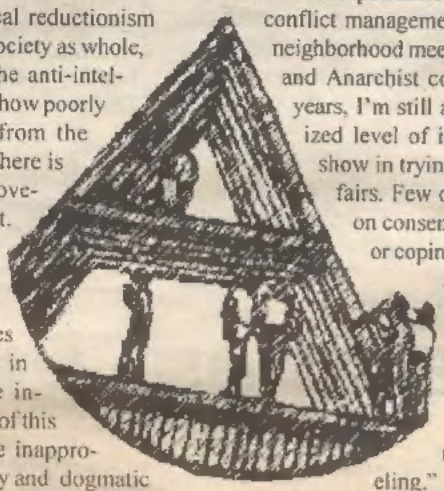
★ Isn't this retreatist?

If you regard community organizing as retreatist, then this is retreatist. If you agree that there is a serious need for a network of anarchists who are practiced in anarchist organizing, if you agree that there is a serious need for a network of anarchist collectives, then you know that this is a revolutionary project.

★ Is this a revolution?

If your model of a revolution is storming the White House, then this isn't your cup of blood. If you believe that the second American revolution will have to be a majoritarian revolution, then maybe this is your cup of tea. Building counter-institutions is more than a strategy of local organizing. It allows us to build a movement, educating people and ourselves in the practice and theory of anarchism. Through counter-institutions we challenge the power and legitimacy of the government, and revolutions do succeed when the people no longer accept the legitimacy of those in power.

Howard J. Ehrlich is a Baltimore-based sociologist. He edits the magazine, *Social Anarchism*, a journal of theory and practice. For 20 years, he was part of the Great Atlantic Radio Conspiracy collective and many of his observations derive from that experience. He can be reached at socialA@nothingness.org



Sexism and the Anarchist Movement

By Angela Beallor

This article is an attempt to add to the discourse that is (or should be) occurring around sexism within the very movements that purport to be fighting it. It was a hard process to distinguish between sexism within the Anarchist movement and the general sexism within society because so many of the criticisms that can be leveled against the Anarchist movement are criticisms of the greater society. There is a void where critical Anarchist feminist/anti-sexist critiques should be which has led to a lack of dialogue and concrete action around sexism. This critique will be based upon many of the weaknesses within the Anarchist movement, which are often compounded around issues of sexism (and other forms of oppression). There is a continuum of thought and concrete action which Anarchists must address or take up in order to combat our own sexism and sexism in the greater society.

Challenging Ideas and Behaviors

The continuum begins with our personal thoughts and behavior. Growing up in a sexist society imbues within us the idea that women are inferior to men. Unless these ideas are thoroughly challenged, in every aspect of our lives, every waking minute, then these ideas are allowed to flourish in our behavior. Many may feel this is an obvious point, but as Kevin Powell wrote in a recent *Ms.* Article, "Everyday I struggle within myself not to use the language of gender oppression, to see the sexism inherent in every aspect of America, to challenge all injustices, not just those that are convenient for me."

Anti-sexism is not just about fighting overt forms of sexism—violent rape, domestic violence, overtly sexist words—it is also about challenging our relationships, the ideas that create a rape culture, the way people are socialized, etc. These are not convenient issues to struggle around for they involve digging deep within ourselves, traveling back in our development, and dedicating time to the difficult process of self-change. We must challenge the ideas and behaviors that promote sexism to other men and alienate women—both in personal relationships and in organizations.

Recognizing that anti-sexist work is a deep, hard process is very important but a point many miss. All too often men who are genuinely against sexism fail to acknowledge and challenge the sexism that lies within themselves. "I AM an anti-sexist," they proclaim. But it is said so loudly that many men fail to hear the voices of women. It becomes a label to proudly sport instead of a serious and difficult process. Don't get me wrong, if a man is indeed anti-sexist, he needs to display it, but this is accomplished through his actions and in his explanations of our current reality—especially to other men. Men must become examples to challenge the mainstream notions of masculinity and that takes more than a simple label.

Often complexities arise, however, when women challenge "anti-sexist" men. Men get defensive when women critique their oppressive and sexist behaviors. Rather than listening, digesting, and benefiting from the criticism, a defensive stance is taken and women's voices are ignored once again. As Anarchists, we should hold criticism and self-criticism as extremely important. No one is above being questioned, there should be no unnecessary hierarchy. The lack of principled criticism and self-criticism within the Anarchist movement is the first problem that is then compounded when applied to issues of sexism and other forms of oppression. Women must be genuinely listened to and, if the criticisms are valid, men should seek to change their thoughts and their actions.

Political Study

Understanding sexism is important to all within the Anarchist movement. However, as a woman, it is not my duty to always answer questions and educate men on how sexism affects my life. Many Anarchist groups already have a program or project in place that could be utilized to gain a better understanding of sexism without burdening women with the task of explaining our lives: the political study group. When was the last time you or your group read something on women, sexism, feminism, or

women's liberation? Many times, and I have been guilty of this, we feel that readings on women's issues are not as important as readings on capitalism or anarchism or anti-colonial struggle, etc. We have to stop considering women's liberation as a side project or issue and view it as an integral part of the liberation struggle. These writings do not have to be specifically Anarchist or even revolutionary to give us good insights. When was the last time you read something by Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Barbara Smith, Angela Davis, Patricia Hill Collins, or Emma Goldman? When was the last time you read something on women in liberation struggles, rape, homophobia and sexism, etc? We must take the initiative to read that which women have placed before us.

Encouraging Women

Since I was a little girl, I was socialized to feel inferior to men. I was socialized to recognize where my "place" was in society and it was *not* participating in an equal dialogue with men, certainly *not* in any type of politics, and it was definitely *not* on any kind of front line of revolutionary struggle. Even growing up in a radical political household, I was instilled with this mentality and I know other women are as well. I often look around at meetings, workshops, events (that are not women-centric) and see that I am one of a handful of women in attendance or worse yet, the only woman there. Alternately, even when there are a lot of women in the room, I find that I am the only woman contributing to the dialogue.

When examining women's involvement in political struggle, we have to examine the root causes. Women are socialized to look at politics as outside of our realm. When the politics are radical or revolutionary, the level of intimidation increases. Because of this reality, we have to exert a lot of time and energy into creating a more anti-sexist/pro-woman movement. We have to start by involving more women within our organizations and movements.

This first involves putting sexism as one of the main points of organization alongside the other issues affecting women (and all humans): racism, homophobia/heterosexism, ableism, colonialism, and class oppression (capitalism). While we cannot place all of our energy into all of these problems at once, we must ensure we are dealing holistically with all of these issues within our focus. Second, we must actively recruit women into our organizations. This takes various forms such as tabling at women's events, consistent outreach to women and participating in women-centric struggles.

Once women are in our organizations, we must look at the level of participation of women within the organization. I have been involved with politics for seven + years. It has only been within the past year and a half that I have fully participated in politics. This is because I have had to learn that I *could* speak in meetings, that I *could* contribute in meaningful and positive ways, and that it is *my place* to contribute and participate. I have had to overcome the intimidation I felt when I was working with men who I looked up to and respected. I had to overcome the mental chains that were holding me back.

A couple factors contributed to this change. A dear comrade helped me realize that I am fully capable of participating and that no one can say different. For him, it was crucial that I participate on an equal level and he put a great deal of time and energy in encouraging me. He continues to put forth this effort for other women. I will forever thank him for how much he has helped me and I would love to see more men take up this task. Then, my level of commitment, seriousness, and sense of responsibility to liberatory politics forced me to put my level of involvement above my sense of comfort. This was not an easy task at all and one that I still struggle with to this day. This is something that we all have to battle within ourselves: Men can help women get to this point by treating women equally and respectfully.

We also must analyze our organizational behaviors. Are we consistently encouraging women to take up leadership positions? Is it mostly men or women who are taking up speaking engagements? Who talks at meetings? Who facilitates meetings? Who does the work of the





ABCF

ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS FEDERATION

"Any movement that does not support their political internees is a sham movement!"

-Ojore Lutalo

Introduction to the ABCF

The Anarchist Black Cross Federation (ABCF) began in 1995 when several unaffiliated Anarchist Black Cross groups federated for the purpose of supporting and defending Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War.

Though members of the ABCF believe in and in most cases are involved in other prison issues, our collective focus has remained PP/POW support and defense. This was for two primary reasons.

1. In the spirit of highlighting our similarities as opposed to our differences, we felt that though the overall Anarchist Black Cross community should work on a variety of prison related issues, Political Prisoner and Prisoner of War support was one issue that we all agreed on.
2. At the time there were several explicitly Anarchist organizations whose primary function was to develop work in the general anti-prison and prisoners rights field. There was NO Anarchist organization working to support or defend PP/POW's.

Those groups who were and continue to be a part of the ABCF have always viewed ourselves as only a PART of the Anarchist Black Cross community, and feel that the overall ABC needs to grow and continue to do work in all areas of prisoner support. We felt the ABCF should simply be the arm of the overall ABC whose responsibility it was to support and defend PP/POW's.

Crucial to doing this responsibly was coming to agreement on what a PP/POW is. A political prisoner or a prisoner of war is one who has participated in political and or revolutionary

activity before their incarceration. And as a result of that activity, were sent to prison. The actual definitions we use are as follows:

1. Political Prisoner: A person incarcerated for actions carried out in support of legitimate struggles for self determination or for opposing the illegal policies of the government and/or its political subdivisions.
2. Prisoner of War: Those combatants struggling against alien domination and racist regimes captured as prisoners are to be accorded the status of prisoner of war and their treatment should be in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Conventions Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 12, August 1949.

Because these definitions are technical rather than explicitly political, we further define those PP/POW's that we will support as "those prisoners incarcerated as a result of political beliefs or actions consciously undertaken and intended to resist exploitation and oppression, and or hasten the implementation of an egalitarian, sustain-

able, ethical, classless society, predicated on self determination and maximization of all people's freedom." [POW Bill Dunne]

Since May 1995 when the ABCF began, much has changed and still more has not. Most, if not all of the above mentioned anarchist groups whose primary function was to support and develop work in the overall prisoner struggle have collapsed. Alongside their collapse was the collapse of much work in that area.

While the ABCF has continued to grow and consolidate our efforts on behalf of PP/POW's, the need for such work far outweighs what we are providing.

Over these past 5 years, the ABCF has developed a number of programs that are examples of our PP/POW support. We will use the rest of this page as an introduction to these programs and provide readers with an outlet to become involved in this support.

In future issues of *ONWARD*, look to the ABCF page for news and events about Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War, the ABCF, and all of our efforts.

ABCF Contacts:

Jacksonville ABCF 4204 Herschel #20 Jacksonville, FL 32210	Philly ABCF 4722 Baltimore Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19143
NJ ABCF P.O. Box 8532 Paterson, NJ 07508	LA ABCF P.O. Box 3671 Anaheim, CA 92803
Kent ABCF P.O. Box 942 Kent, OH 44240	Montreal ABCF 2035 St Laurent 2 etage Montreal, QB H2X 2T3, Canada
Winnipeg ABCF Box 64028, RPO Morse Pl Winnipeg, MB R2K 4K2 Canada	Orlando ABCF P.O. Box 677572 Orlando, FL 32876-7572
Lancaster ABCF P.O. Box 891 Lancaster, PA 17608	Houston ABCF c/o Eric W. 1436 W. Grey #433 Houston, TX 77019
Binghamton ABC Bing. U, Hnm. Col. #09501/Box6009 Binghamton, NY 13902-6009	

Support the Warchest Program

Having started in 1994 only slightly before the formation of the ABCF, the Warchest program has been a reliable and consistent source of material aid for Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War for 6 years.

Operating on a support base of small regular and one time donations, this program has grown into the largest of its kind. Currently sending regular checks of \$60 per month to 7 Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War, and having sent assistance to more than a dozen more through the Warchest's Emergency Fund, the warchest is in many cases the only financial support some PP/POW's receive on a regular basis.

Funds coming in to the warchest generally take on two different forms. Those supporting individuals or groups who support the Warchest by sending in donations on a regular basis, and those who send in one time donations. Funds that are sent out reflect these two different kinds of donations.

The Warchest serves two different and separate functions for PP/POW's, Regular Support and the Emergency Fund.

Regular Support is for those PP/POW's who have little to no other financial support. The funds collected on a regular basis are disseminated on the basis of who is in the most need to our knowledge. When we receive enough additional regular funds to consistently sustain an additional outgoing check, those PP/POW's who have the least financial assistance will take priority over those with more.

An example of a PP/POW who receives regular support for the Warchest is Sekou Odinga, ■ BLA POW currently imprisoned in Marion, IL. Prior to and up until today, Sekou has received NO regular financial support from any one or group. Financial support he did receive was very inconsistent and unreliable. Sekou has been receiving a \$60 check each and every single month since November 1994. To date he has received more than \$4,000 of support from the Warchest.

The Emergency Fund consists of those one time donations and contributions received by the Warchest. The Emergency Fund is available to PP/POW's who may not need a regular check, but are in need of quick, and immediate assistance on a case by case basis.

An example of Emergency Fund support is when BLA POW Jalil Muntaqim was transferred two separate times to two different NY State prisons in the middle of winter. Each time prison employees 'lost' Jalil's winter coat and gloves.

The Emergency fund was able to purchase these items for him immediately.

Another example of Emergency Fund support was when United Freedom Front PP Jaan Laaman needed funds to help him continue his college classes. After another cut in spending on prisoners, grants usually available for prisoners to continue classes became unavailable and without support, Jaan would not have been able to receive his degree. Or when former FALN POW Carmen Valentin needed to purchase a radio after hers was broken. Or anarchist POW Ojore Lutalo was needed to re-subscribe to the New York Times, or when BLA POW Sekou Odinga or United Freedom Front PP Richard Williams were in need of further assistance to have their children travel great distances to visit them. The Emergency Fund was able to help in each of these and many more cases.

However the Warchest does not exist magically, and there is no ever ending bountiful money tree we have discovered. It exists on donations only. Though ABCF groups are required to support the Warchest on some level, the majority of its support is from people such as yourself. Groups like the one you may be in.

We need regular support to increase the number of prisoners supported regularly. If you are in even a small collective, consider collecting \$2 or \$3 a month from each of its members to support the Warchest's ongoing efforts to provide

regular financial aid to those PP/POW's who have no other support. If you are a member of a radical bookstore or info shop, consider donating a small portion of sales (1% or 2%). If you do a disiro, think about contributing a part of the proceeds from items you sell related to PP/POW's to the Warchest.

If you don't feel you can contribute regularly, or even if you can and want to help more, organize a benefit show, raffle or fundraiser of some sort and make a one time donation to assist the Emergency Fund. Donations of \$5, \$50, \$100 or more has made it possible for the Emergency Fund to help as many PP/POW's as it has for so long. We need to keep this going and can only do so with your help.

The Warchest has survived for 6 years on small donations between \$5 and \$15 a month from groups and individuals such as yourself. One time donations have ranged from under \$4 to in the hundreds from bands like Winnipeg's Propghandi and Tree from Boston. Concealed cash is best, but checks and money orders made out to NEIL BATELLI can be sent to Jacksonville ABCF. A complete financial report is prepared by Jacksonville ABCF which includes all monies received and all monies sent out. All prisoners address are printed so supporters or anyone can write them and hold us accountable to our claims. Get in touch for more...

Other Things to Know...

There are many more things to become involved in with the ABCF to support PP/POW's. The movements they came from, and building a strong movement to support and defend them. The following are other activities of the ABCF and who to contact to find out more.

The Anarchist Subsistence Fund is similar to the Warchest except it is designed to support those PP/POW's who come from our own anarchist and antiauthoritarian community. Currently, this program is supporting one prisoner, Ojore Lutalo by way of a check and 40 stamps per month. For more information on this, contact Lancaster ABCF.

The ABCF Update is the bimonthly public magazine of the ABCF. It prints chapter reports, progress on programs, news and notes, letters from PP/POW's and much more. For subscription rates and other information contact Kent ABCF.

Running Down the Walls is a yearly marathon to raise funds for PP/POW's. The first annual run held in 1999 was supported and enjoyed the participation of PP/POW's and other prisoners in Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary. This years run is being planned now. Contact LA ABCF for more information.

The Men Against Sexism Caucus is a formation within the ABCF. Within a newsletter we discussing and presenting ideas about sexism within ourselves, our political communities and how to combat them. For more info contact Winnipeg ABCF.

The Tactical Defense Caucus is a formation within the ABCF which publicly advocates anarchists and other leftists learn to defend themselves. The TDC has produced two armed self defense videos, has plans to publish a book, and start its own newsletter. Contact Jax ABCF.



Sexism...

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organization, and then, who gets credit for it? (I was involved in organizing a conference once with two men and four women. One man was credited with the entire conference and we, (the women), were treated by him and others as his "helpers." We did the majority of the work, though!). We have to be very perceptive of men talking over women, invalidating and/or ignoring a woman's words and contributions. We all must make an extra effort to look at the gender dynamics of our functions and meetings. Without the direct leadership of women in any movement, our important voices are left out of the dialogue and the fight against sexism.

Anarchist Organizational Structures

One of the biggest challenges to the Anarchist movement is creating viable Anarchistic/anti-authoritarian structures for our organizations. We are struggling to create new ideas of organization from the examples we have had and through new ideas and innovations. Not only are we trying to organize our movement in an Anarchist fashion but it is also a testing ground for a potential future society.

Anarchism seeks to create a society based on a great sense of personal responsibility and accountability to ourselves and each other. We want a society based on mutual aid and communalism. This cannot happen out of spontaneous activity; it must result out of a highly organized society based on democratic, decentralized structures. I hope the Anarchist movement realizes the need to work out new structural ideas for our organizations and a new society. I know many feel creating structure inherently runs counter to the ideas and principles of Anarchism. I would argue that *not* sitting down and forming democratic structures is counter to the ideas and principles of Anarchism.

Jo Freeman wrote in "The Tyranny of Structurelessness" that "The idea of structurelessness does not prevent the formation of informal structures, only formal ones. A 'laissez-faire' ideal for group structure becomes a smoke screen for the strong or the lucky to establish unquestioned hegemony over others. Thus structurelessness becomes a way of masking power. As long as the structure of the group is informal, the rules of how decisions are made are known only to the few, and awareness of power is limited to those who know the rules."

Structurelessness is often a means to perpetuate sexism, racism and class stratification. If men are socialized to be leaders and women are not, then it is not hard to imagine who would

develop into leaders in a non-structured organization. A lack of structure provides no means of balancing those with certain privileges with those who are oppressed. We must create organizational structures that inherently guard against these forms of power imbalance.

In forming Anarchist organizational structures, we must also form structures to specifically deal with sexism in our organizations. One very sensitive issue that we have to be dealing with is sexual assault (and domestic violence). I have heard of many situations where a politically active male has sexually assaulted a fellow activist. It would be impossible to plan out all of the steps of dealing with this type of situation—especially since the survivor of sexual assault should largely control what happens—but we need a skeleton of steps to help handle this type of situation. Members of any organization should all have political education on both rape and sexual assault and how to deal when you or someone you know has been raped. Organizations should have a framework so that they are not fumbling around when sexual assault happens. Not having a framework could leave a survivor with little to no support from those whom should be providing as much support as she or he needs.

What can Anarchist organizations do in these situations? What do we do if one amongst us is sexually assaulted? What do we do if one amongst us has sexually assaulted someone else? What do we do when both parties are in our organization? I challenge all organizations to consider how to prevent sexual assault from occurring in the first place, how to deal with it if it does, and how to support survivors of sexual assault to the fullest extent possible.

Taking up Womens' Struggle

The struggle against sexism is everyone's struggle. It affects everyone: men, women and transgendered peoples. It is especially important that anti-sexist men, who benefit from sexism, take up the struggle for women's liberation. Just as it is especially important for white people to dedicate themselves to anti-racist struggle and straight people to dedicate themselves to anti-homophobia/heterosexism work, men must dedicate an intense amount of time to anti-sexist work.

For Anarchist men, the question is, are you involved with struggles spontaneously taken up by women, led and organized by women, and primarily aimed at other women? If not, why? I have heard the claim that many of the struggles are "too reformist or mainstream." In some cases this is my critique as well but I do not see a revolutionary struggle in the United States that is able to aid women in the ways these move-

ments do. The answer is not to ignore these movements but to build new movements within or without that which already exists. Are Anarchists creating alternate structures for survivors of sexual assault? Are we able to aid abused women in a revolutionary fashion at this point in time? We cannot just throw up our hands—mine and all women's lives depend on it.

Others brush anti-sexist struggle off as "women's work." Others do not see anti-sexist struggle as central to the struggle for liberation. Others believe we can wait to challenge sexism when revolutionary change occurs. These analyses must change. If we truly want an egalitarian society then we must begin creating a more equitable movement—along lines of race, class, gender, and sexuality. We must make the Anarchist movement a women's movement. If we want an end to sexism, our work should have begun yesterday.

Forward Always, Backwards Never

Anarchists often have a good analysis of the way sexism is "a mesh of practices, institutions, and ideas which have an overall effect of giving more power to men than to women." Beginning with an institutional analysis is correct, however, we must also translate this into our own thoughts and actions. Only then can all Anarchists work together most effectively (at least along gender lines but we must also deal with homophobia, racism and class issues). To create an egalitarian society, our movement must be egalitarian and presently it is not. Working to create revolutionary change must begin today by challenging our sexist, racist, and heterosexist capitalist society. It means challenging that which is in ourselves, our families, our neighborhoods, our communities and our movements. As Kevin Powell said, "Just as I feel it is whites who need to be more vociferous about racism in their communities, I feel it is men who need to speak long and loud about sexism among each other." The Anarchist movement needs to be more vocal and active in the struggle against sexism. *All* our lives depend on it.

1. Powell, Kevin. 2000. "Confessions of a Recovering Misogynist." *Ms.* (April/May): 77.
2. Freeman, Jo. 197-. "The Tyranny of Structurelessness." *Second Wave* 2 (1), pp. ?
3. Blood, Peter, Alan Tuttle and George Lakey. "Understanding and Fighting Sexism: A Call to Men." In *Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology*, Margaret Anderson and Patricia Hill Collins, ed., pp. 181-187. California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
4. Powell, Kevin. 2000. "Confessions of a Recovering Misogynist." *Ms.* (April/May): 77.

Contact Angela c/o Kent Anarchist Black Cross at: PO Box 942, Kent, Ohio 44240.

Who Was Shaka...

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to "Phase 2," a section where inmates wait to die. It's often a smaller cell with more severe restrictions. Shaka had told the world he would not go along peacefully and he meant it; the guards beat him severely to get him to Phase 2 and later beat him to get him onto the gurney. A man named Ricky Jason went to visit Shaka while on Phase 2 and said that while in the prison bathroom, he overheard two guards laughing about how "Gary" had no more legal appeals and said "Now we can execute that nigger." Upon arriving at the prison, Ricky met Shaka and gave this report:

"[Shaka] was covered in filth with his shirt ripped, looking as though he had been wallowing on the ground. He had a huge knot over his eyebrow and was shaking like a leaf, stuttering, and asking for food." Shaka wanted to know how Ricky got in; that they had put him on restriction so that only a lawyer, minister or media person could see him. All regular visits had been stopped. Ricky told Shaka to just hurry up and tell him what had happened in case the guards came in and forced him to leave.

Shaka told Ricky that the day the execution date was set, guards came to his cell with their heads covered by hoods to conceal their identity. They said, "Let's go, Graham" and Shaka replied, "I'm not going anywhere, I'm innocent, I didn't do nothing." Guards told him he had to be moved to the next phase and tear gassed him twice, beat and dragged him to the other room, where Shaka passed out. The guards took everything from him; his radio, his typewriter, even his underwear.

On June 22, Shaka refused to order a last meal and asked that Jesse Jackson, a member of Amnesty International, Reverend Al Sharpton and George W. Bush Jr. be his witnesses. They reported that when he came out, he gave a final statement asking his supporters to push on regardless of his condition and kept saying "They are killing an innocent man tonight." He looked beaten and bruised, indicating the force applied to get him in the gurney. It took 5 men to get him held down where he was handcuffed to the gurney so he couldn't resist. He died in the middle of his statement as the lethal injection killed him, making him the 135 person to be executed by George W. Bush Jr., who, to no surprise, never showed. The world was watching: all the major news programs were live outside along with hundreds of supporters for Shaka and a few Bush supporters (mostly Ku Klux Klan members).

George W. Bush Jr. made a public statement saying he felt justice was being done.

SUMMER OF STRUGGLE

Philadelphia!

This summer's actions will be preceded by a week-long convergence of activists upon Philadelphia beginning July 24, allowing people coming in to do direct action an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the city and scout possible targets. Starting on Monday July 24, there will be continuous training at several different locations. These locations will be set in the same general area of Philly. This convergence "zone" will have food, water, bathrooms, bike rentals, and shade available all day long.

To get as many people trained in as many different issues and tactics as possible, the centerpiece of the convergence week will be numerous trainings and workshops. The more we network these different issues and tactics, the more effective we will be for the RNC action and beyond. There will be action spokes council meetings every evening so make sure that your affinity group representative is here by the 24. There will be day-long puppet making workshops going on and we need artists to volunteer. We are going to need many volunteers for tasks ranging from cooking to security, so please come ready to help.

For obvious security reasons, the locations of the convergence will be withheld as long as possible. Expect to find out the location of and directions to registration about a week before the convergence begins. This will be the place where you'll get hooked up with your housing and receive the orientation packets that will list the itinerary for the coming week.

-- JULY 31: March for Economic Human Rights

Sponsored by Kensington Welfare Rights Union, KWRU will lead a march from Philadelphia City

Hall, down South Broad Street, to the First Union Center, where the convention is.

-- AUG 1: Target: The Criminal Injustice System

Including the Prison Industrial Complex, Racist and Classist Sentencing Practices, The (Drug) War on Civil Liberties, Prison Reform, Death Penalty Abolition, Political Prisoners (Free Mumia!)

-- AUG 2: Target: Direct Action Convention Disruption

-- AUG 3: Jail Solidarity and other surprises!

For the most up-to-date information, visit www.thepartyover.org

Los Angeles!

By Michael Novick, People Against Racist Terror

Four years ago, there were some "small but spirited" protests at the Republican Convention in San Diego and the Democratic Convention in Chicago, the work of committed activists. This year, things are different. A number of different currents and mass movements are building and converging toward "R2K" in Philly and "D2K" in LA. The movement to win justice and freedom for Mumia Abu Jamal has been building and strengthening as pivotal moments in his legal process approach. The Republican Convention is being held in the state where Mumia is on death row, in the city where the MOVE bombing took place, with the host governor, the man who signed Mumia's death warrant. Two weeks later, as the Democrats meet in L.A., the man chairing their convention is Ed Rendell, former prosecutor and mayor of Philadelphia, who made his political career with attacks on MOVE and

Mumia, and has been seeking Mumia's execution for many years. But there is lots more to protest at both conventions. It's time to tell the rulers that their party's over!

DAN (Direct Action Network) has called for non-violent civil disobedience at both party conventions around a focus on issues of the criminal justice system as well as corporate globalization and domination. DAN has identified such issues as systemic police brutality, the prison-industrial complex, and freedom for political prisoners like Mumia and Leonard Peltier as central to a call for racial justice. The Fair Trade Network and Global Exchange are focusing on the both parties' support for NAFTA and the WTO, and the control of the political process by corporate interests responsible for exploitation of workers and environmental degradation worldwide. In LA, there are demonstrations planned against the sanctions and bombings of Iraq, the US Navy occupation of Vieques, and against sweatshop labor in Los Angeles itself.

--Aug 11-17: North American Anarchist Conference (NAAC) contact: The August Collective

PO Box 6188
Fullerton CA 92834
naacweb@hotmail.com

--AUG 12: Demonstration in nearby Long Beach, CA outside the Reform Party convention which is expected to nominate neo-fascist Pat Buchanan calling on people to defend freedom, peace and justice and oppose Buchanan's racist and reactionary program of chauvinist economic nationalism, homophobia, attacks on women's rights, racism, anti-semitism and anti-immigrant hysteria. There are also protests this day against genetically-engineered foods, and that night is a civil disobedience action at the Santa Monica pier, where the DNC is hosting a shindig for its high roller big donors.

There is also a People's Convention Friday

through Sunday sponsored by the Committees of Correspondence.

--August 13: March for Mumia, sponsored by the LA Coalition to Stop the Execution of Mumia Abu Jamal, calling for a new trial.

---Aug. 14: Opening day of the Convention. Mass unity rally, sponsored by the D2KLA Network, composed of a large number of groups and individuals working to coordinate, support and sponsor events and nonviolent protests during the Democratic National Convention from August 14-17. There is also an R2D2 coordination between protesters at the DNC convention in LA and those at the RNC convention in Philadelphia. The LA Direct Action network (DAN-LA) is coordinating and providing logistical and legal support for non-violent civil disobedience actions. It is also planning actions of its own via working committees and affinity groups. The network has proposed non-exclusionary themes for the various days.

--AUG 15: "An Injury to One is an Injury to All: Racial, Gender, Les-Bi-Gay-Trans, Economic and Environmental Justice." A demonstration is being planned out of the Arab-American community against US attacks on Iraq, including the sanctions which are killing hundreds, mostly children, everyday.

--AUG 16: "Stop Police Brutality and the Prison-Industrial Complex - Free All Political Prisoners - Stop the Death Penalty and the Criminalization of Our Communities." There are expected to be two major rallies coordinated with each other, focusing on political prisoners and police brutality and mass incarceration.

For more information, contact People Against Racist Terror (PART), 310-495-0299, part2001@usa.net. Puerto Rican and Native American forces are converging on LA to seek freedom for the political prisoners and POWs captured in their liberation struggle, such as

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★Earth First! Journal (Earth Liberation prisoners) PO Box 1415 Eugene OR 97440 USA earthfirst@igc.org www.earthfirstjournal.org

★Frontline Information Service (Animal and Earth Liberation prisoners) www.enviroweb.org/ALFIS/index2.shtml

★The Jericho Movement (class war prisoners) PO Box 650, New York, NY 10009 jericho98@usa.net www.thejerichomovement.com

★No Compromise (Animal and

Earth Liberation prisoners) PO Box 1440 Santa Cruz CA 95060-0917 nocomp@waste.org www.nocompromise.org

★The Nuclear Resister (anti-nuke/pacifist prisoners) PO Box 43383 Tucson AZ 85733-3383 USA nukeresister@igc.org www.nonviolence.org/nukeresister/whoweare.html

★ Political Prisoners of War Coalition PO Box 554 Lincoln MA 10773 USA cwritsher@aol.com

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This is a partial listing of political prisoners and prisoners of war currently imprisoned in America. This is a list of class war prisoners compiled by the Anarchist Black Cross Federation. Those listed come from a variety of backgrounds- Anarchist, communist, socialist; New Afrikans, Puerto Rican independistas and white anti- Imperialists. In our present state of struggle, the best thing we can do is learn from those who have been fighting for the same things for a long time... and now face extreme repression because of it. If we fail to support our prisoners, we have already lost. Please write to someone today! Following this list of prisoners is a list of organizations that do prisoner support for other types of political prisoners: animal and earth liberationists, anti- nuclear activists etc. Political prisoners need our support!

Ethnic Cleansing...

continued from page 6

Clinton provided 1.2 million dollars for funerals and counseling), equating what Serbia is doing to Kosovo Albanians to an American form ethnic cleansing of Blacks is not a far stretch of the imagination. It is a well established historical fact the U.S. government is capable of such horrendous inhumane activities. As an example, the genocidal decimation of the Native American population and continued violation of treaties; African chattel slavery and denial of reparations; the atomic bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima; carpet bombing and the use of defoliates in Vietnam; the 250,000 Iraqis killed in seven days of bombing during Desert Storm. All of these give credence to the proposition the U.S. government is tacitly capable of engaging in ethnic cleansing, while at the same time propagate it's upholding standards of human rights.

As the new millennium begins, it is expected the U.S. will continue to lead all industrial nations with the largest prison population. The

American ethnic cleansing process will soon go into its second phase, increase death penalty executions, further restrictions on public and media oversight of prison management, limit prisoner's appeals and movement and broaden the market of prison-made products.

Because it is supported by the media, the subtle approach of the American ethnic cleansing is unnoticed, it doesn't alarm the ire of the majority of American populace or the concerns of the broader international community. However, this reality in fact exists, and it is time public leaders and the media begin to recognize the claimed economic prosperity of American does not translate into racial and ethnic harmony and stability. There is something extremely wrong with the disproportionate number of Black incarceration, and it has little to do with a pretext of a war on drugs and crime. It should be described for what it actually is, the racist American style of ethnic cleansing. (see above for Jalil's contact information)

Summer...

continued from page 15

Oscar Lopez Rivera and Leonard Peltier. LA, like other cities in the US, is in the midst of a huge police abuse scandal and many forces are uniting against the criminal injustice system.

—AUG 17: There is a closing-day theme of Global Economic Justice and International Solidarity - End Militarism and Defend Indigenous, Immigrant, and Workers' Rights. A torchlight vigil and moonlight street festival of resistance are planned.

Iraq...

continued from page 7

of the services that a country of 24 million people will need.

Similar to "Oil for Food," the US claims that Security Council resolution 1284 will alleviate the hardships of sanctions. This resolution has 11 preambles and 39 requirements for Iraq to follow, and nowhere does it suspend sanctions, give a time limit for sanctions, or set out conditions where sanctions will be ended. It's time to cut through the US lies. Stop the war.

Get Involved!

Join the international movement against the sanctions to show the US government we don't support their actions and will not tolerate genocide! To get more information, pamphlets, books, videos or to get involved with a national net-

work, contact: International Action Center (http://www.iacenter.org or 212-633-6646), Voices in the Wilderness (http://www.nonviolence.org/vitw/ or 773-784-8065), or the Iraq Action Coalition (http://www.leb.net/IAC). Join the International Action Center's 4th delegation to Iraq in late Autumn. Educate your community with teach-ins, showing videos, petitioning, and writing letters to the editor. Most importantly, we need to hold people accountable for what is happening in Iraq. Get involved and build the movement against the sanctions.

Michael Chameides is a philosophy and gender studies major at Bard College. He went to Iraq in January 2000. He is a member of the Mid-Hudson Direct Action Network in Upstate New York and works with the International Action Center. Contact him at mc753@bard.edu or at Bard College, Annandale NY 12504 USA